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Serving the highly skilled men and women in Michigan's building trades unions

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SHORT CUTS

Jobless numbers come up short

WASHINGTON, D.C. (PAI) – The nation's economists were underwhelmed with the latest U.S. unemployment rate and job gains in April – much stronger numbers were expected.

The U.S. gained 266,000 jobs in April; it was not a normally bad number, but disappointing given that economists were expecting a million jobs to have been filled as vaccines are injected in arms and the nation's economy emerges from its COVID restraints. Meanwhile, the nation's unemployment rate inched up 0.1 percent to 6.1 percent in April.

"While the overall growth was far below expectations, leisure and hospitality gained 331,000 jobs (offsetting jobs lost elsewhere), a sign that increased demand has led to significant gains in employment in that sector," said Economic Policy Institute Senior Economist Elise Gould. "Likely in response to improving public health metrics and increased expectations of job opportunities, more and more workers are actively returning to the labor force in search of work."

COVID-19 cases are declining in the U.S., but the virus is not done casting a shadow over the nation's health, and the nation's economy. There are still 16.15 million Americans who are receiving state or federal jobless aid – amounting to 11.6 percent of all American workers. And, the number of people in the workforce, including those who have work and the jobless who seek it, is 8.2 million below its peak in early 2020.

There were flat numbers for construction, which maintained a 7.7 percent jobless rate in the industry in April. That still left 768,000 of construction workers unemployed. In April 2020, the absolute number was more than double that number, along with a 16.6 percent jobless rate in the building trades.

Teamsters primed to move on Amazon

Labor unions are not through with trying to organize Amazon.

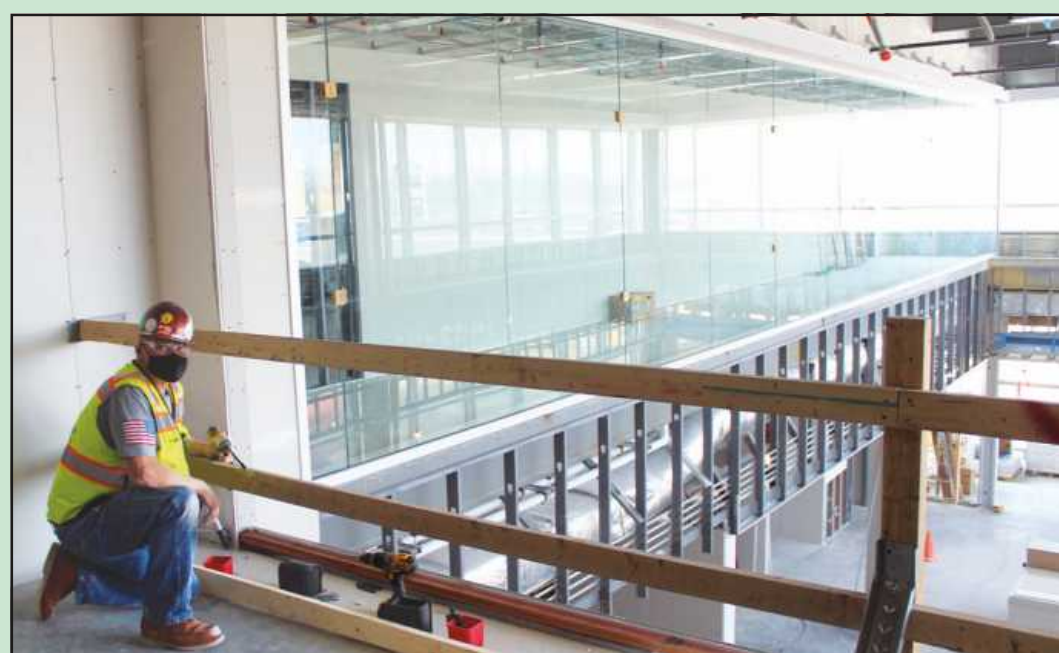
Just weeks after the Retail Workers union lost an organizing drive at an Amazon warehouse in Bessemer, Ala. by a wide margin, Teamsters President James Hoffa told the *Off the Record* television program earlier this month that the union is ready to start a campaign to organize Amazon truck drivers. Hoffa said: "We just had a Zoom call yesterday with all our leaders in the country. We're about ready to launch."

Hoffa added: "Amazon is a very tough company. They've got a lot of money and they know how to fight dirty. So, we're ready for the fight. That's our next goal," he said.

Noting that Amazon "flooded a thousand new people into the bargaining unit" which affected the vote in Alabama, Hoffa said the Teamsters and other unions plan to organize workers in different segments of the company. "The idea is to hit them all at once and basically spread them out so they can't concentrate like they did in Alabama," Hoffa said.

Quotable

"The people I distrust most are those who want to improve our lives but have only one course of action."
—Frank Herbert (1920 - 1986)



LOOKING UP from his installation of an atrium glass partition at the Beaumont Outpatient Campus-Lenox facility is Ken Watson of Glaziers and Glassworkers Local 357. He's employed by Edwards Glass.

New option for health care set to open in Macomb County

By Marty Mulcahy
Editor

LENOX TWP. – Construction of Beaumont Health's newest version of a comprehensive outpatient care facility is rapidly moving toward completion.

The Beaumont Outpatient Campus-Lenox facility brings to northeast Macomb County a new option for a full slate of health care services, in a three-story, 109,650-square-foot building erected near the intersection of I-94 and 26 Mile Rd.

General contractor Roncelli, Inc. is managing the project, which has been employing 80-85 tradespeople on

a daily basis, a number which is expected to ramp up a bit as more finish trades move in to do their work. A temporary certification of

occupancy is expected to be issued June 9, with tenant occupation of the building taking

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ERECTED NEXT TO a Meijer near I-94 and 26 Mile Road, the Beaumont Outpatient Campus-Lenox will create a convenient option for a higher level of health care to residents of northeast Macomb County. Roncelli is the project's construction manager.



HEFTING A DUCT ELBOW SECTION across second-floor shell space at the Beaumont-Lenox Township facility are (l-r) foreman Chris Ratzel and Kody Gaffney of Sheet Metal Workers Local 80. They're employed by Limbach.

Ulterior factors restrain construction growth

The U.S. construction industry appears to be primed for a strong year, but some secondary factors may throw a wet blanket on any explosion in growth.

The most recent Dodge Momentum Index for U.S. Construction bore some glad tidings – on

May 7 the index posted a strong 8.6 percent gain in April. Issued by Dodge Data & Analytics, it's a monthly measure of the first report for nonresidential building projects in planning, which have been shown to lead construction spending for nonresidential

buildings.

Dodge said April's gain was the fifth consecutive monthly increase in the momentum number, and similar to February and March, it was due to a large increase in institutional buildings entering the planning stage – up

77 percent since January. Commercial sector planning, however, dropped for the month by less than one percent. That fault line and others taking place in a COVID-affected economy – like worker shortages and historic

(Continued on Page 4)

Employers: Want workers? It's time to pay a living wage

By Rebekah Entralgo

The sudden shift from "we love our essential workers" to "they're living off the government dole" seemingly happened overnight.

Across the country, local media coverage has been filled with stories of business owners

Viewpoint

lamenting that they are unable to fill positions as economies reopen. "We are short-staffed. Please be patient with the staff who did show up. Nobody wants to work anymore," reads a sign outside a McDonalds drive-

through window in Texas, according to a viral internet video.

These viral anecdotes, in addition to a weaker than expected April jobs report, have raised concerns over a labor shortage in the United States and how to best address it. *The Wall Street Journal* reports a record

8.1 million job openings across the country.

But it's not that people don't want to work – it's that they don't want to work for so little.

Dan Price, the CEO of Gravity Payments who raised the starting wage at his company to

(Continued on Page 15)

State Capitol Heritage Center pokes out of the ground

By Marty Mulcahy
Editor

LANSING – The Michigan Capitol Building's interior and exterior have been extensively and exquisitely renovated and refurbished in recent years – a project managed by Christman Constructors with the expertise of building trades union workers and their contractors.

In an effort to help maintain the beautiful 1879 building's features, the Michigan State Capitol Commission voted at their Feb-

ruary 2019 meeting to create a new \$55 million Heritage Hall, a 54,000-square-foot underground addition – under the northwest side of the Capitol's grounds.

The project, approved by the state Legislature, stems from a 1980s recommendation from preservation architect Richard Frank, who wrote the Capitol's first comprehensive Preservation Master Plan. "When Michigan's current Capitol opened in 1879, no one anticipated how government, citizen engagement, and

the state's population would grow," the Capitol Commission said. "Today the Capitol welcomes

(Continued on Page 2)

HERITAGE HALL, under construction on the west side of the Michigan Capitol Building in Lansing, will provide underground space for large meetings and tour group assemblies while reducing the pressure placed on the 142-year-old building.

Credit:

Michigan Capitol Commission



'Right-to-work doesn't, in fact, work' New RTW study re-states the law's lack of benefits

(From the IBEW)

Long-shot efforts to roll back right-to-work laws in Michigan and Virginia aren't likely to level the playing field for working people this year, but a new study provides fresh ammunition for pro-union lawmakers in the fight for repeal.

The study, released earlier this year by the Illinois Economic Policy Institute and the Project for Middle Class Renewal at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, lays out how, on a number of metrics, states with right-to-work laws come up short. From lower wages to less community engagement, states with these deceptively-named laws are failing working families.

Researchers looked at data dating back to 2008 to determine the impact of right-to-work laws

on state economies and worker well-being. What they found paints a bleak picture. The 27 U.S. states that have enacted right-to-work laws (Michigan's RTW law was adopted in 2012) saw slower economic growth, lower wages, higher consumer debt, worse health outcomes and lower levels of civic participation than states that do not have such laws.

"This new study shows what we've known all along, that right-to-work doesn't, in fact, work," said IBEW International President Lonnie R. Stephenson. "It doesn't help people and it doesn't help states. Instead, these laws prop up a corporate bottom line – usually at the expense of the workers that make their profits possible."

That's why labor-friendly

(Continued on Page 4)

Death on the Job report: some progress made, but struggle continues

By Mark Gruenberg
Press Associates Staff Writer

WASHINGTON (PAI) – In the five decades since the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) was established, there's been a lot of progress in cutting worker deaths and injuries on the job, but there's still a long way to go.

That's a big conclusion from the data in the AFL-CIO's 30th annual *Death On The Job* report, released May 4, a week after OSHA's 50th anniversary.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act, strongly pushed by organized labor and particularly crafted by the late Tony Mazzocchi of the old Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, has helped cut deaths on the job from nine per 100,000 workers 30 years ago to 3.5 per 100,000 in 2019, the latest available data, included in the report, shows.

"This year, we commemorate 50 years of OSHA and the lives saved by ensuring workers are protected on the job," said AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler. "COVID-19 has been a

stark reminder that workplace safety protections are absolutely critical, and we still have a long way to go. As a country, we must renew our commitment to safe jobs for all workers and invest the resources to make that happen."

The death rate has stalled since 2017. And the 3.5/100,000 rate still translates into having 275 workers die every day from hazardous working conditions, the report says.

Those figures actually understate the case, Shuler told the Zoom press conference unveiling the report. "About 95,000 workers a year die from occupational illnesses," often contracted long before, she pointed out. And illness and death disproportionately hit workers of color, she added.

The law's weak penalties don't help. The maximum federal fine for death of a worker on the job is \$12,788, though some states have higher fines.

The maximum jail time if a worker dies is six months. And combined state and federal OSHAs have fewer inspectors now, 1,798, than 30 years ago. "The problems are structural," Shuler said, adding corporate opposition has hamstrung new worker safety rules for years.

"But we have some good news: We have a pro-worker president, a pro-worker vice president and a pro-worker majority in Congress," which gives workers a chance to improve the OSH Act

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Viewpoints



Finally, workers a priority

The Teamsters and other unions for years have been urging lawmakers in Washington, D.C., to prioritize the needs of working people, given that the wealthy in this country have never done better. Finally, elected officials are responding.

More than a million hardworking Americans are set to benefit from a multiemployer pension fix enacted by Congress in March, and efforts to help U.S. workers haven't stopped there. President Joe Biden in recent weeks rolled out substantive proposals like the American Jobs Plan and the American Families Plan that would bring good-paying jobs and work-home balance to many workers who have been struggling to support their families during the pandemic.

The American Jobs Plan offers a broad vision for putting the nation's economy on a 21st Century path toward better-paying jobs that lift up American workers, promoting job creation and worker protections. The Biden administration's commitment to modernizing the nation's aging infrastructure will produce quality opportunities that will revitalize the middle class.

No matter which side of the aisle lawmakers are on, infrastructure investment has long been a goal supported by Democrats and Republicans. While the U.S. is the wealthiest country in the world, it ranks a dismal 13th when it comes to the overall quality of infrastructure. After decades of disinvestment, the nation's transportation network is crumbling and something must be done.

But that's not all the legislation aims to reform. The White House's push for Congress to enact the Protecting the Right to Organize Act as a key piece of the American Jobs Plan is another sign that Biden is fulfilling his promise to reform labor law and empower millions of workers looking for a voice on the job.

It also focuses on innovation in a new economy that will create hundreds of thousands of quality jobs. American workers will build and make things in every part of this country, and they will be trained for well-paying, middle-class union jobs.

Meanwhile, the American Families Plan is a sweeping measure that lifts up hardworking Americans by expanding education opportunities, mandating paid leave, subsidizing child care and health care for low- and middle-income workers and providing tax relief to the middle class.

Nobody could argue that the pandemic has disproportionately strained working women, who often struggle to balance a job (or two) while caring for both younger and older generations. Many have simply left the workforce, but the American Families Plan will go a long way toward alleviating these issues.

Not only will workers be able to receive free workforce training like the Teamsters offer or earn a two-year degree at a community college, but their children will also be eligible for free pre-K schooling beginning at age 3. Childcare costs will be capped for many workers, and they will be eligible for up to 12 weeks of paid leave to care for themselves or ailing loved ones.

Lawmakers were elected to improve the lives of all of their constituents. It's time to drop the political games and do what's right for those just trying to earn an honest living, and not just those who have already seen good fortune in the past few years.

Teamsters President James Hoffa

From the Detroit News Labor Voices, May 5, 2021

The Building Tradesman welcomes your letters to the editor.

By mail: Building Tradesman Editor,
1640 Porter St. Detroit, MI 48216

or, e-mail: buildingtradesman@ameritech.net

Heritage Center pokes out of the ground

(Continued from Page 1)

250,000 annual visitors who attend legislative sessions, take tours, and participate in everything from farmers markets to concerts, commemorations, advocacy days, and demonstrations."

Frank recommended the construction of the subterranean addition to relieve some of the human stress that's placed on the Capitol building.

Heritage Hall will include a 600-seat auditorium for larger functions, and an expanded and safer educational environment for the 115,000 Michigan school children who visit the Capitol each year. Tour groups will have expanded meeting and orientation spaces and new educational exhibits highlighting the history of the Michigan Capitol Building.

STEELERECTION continues at the Heritage Hall project at the Michigan Capitol Building. Among the Tri-Steel, Local 25 iron workers putting it up are D.J. Kalvo, Dave Nelson, Tom Gaines, Ryan Richardson, Doug Cramer and Zac Culimore.

Photo by Marc Crance

ing, a National Historic Landmark.

The commission said incorporating the construction of Heritage Hall into the Capitol Restoration/ Infrastructure Upgrade

project will save about \$1.5 million. The upgrade work at the Capitol Building, which began under Christman in 2017, implemented a host of improvements to the building, including a new

geothermal system, an all-new heating and cooling system, electrical upgrades, extensive masonry repairs, as well as waterproofing, plaster and decorative paint repair.



HERITAGE HALL will have several large skylights to brighten the underground space and offer views of the Capitol, as shown in the rendering above and the photo, above right.



Images via the Michigan Capitol Commission



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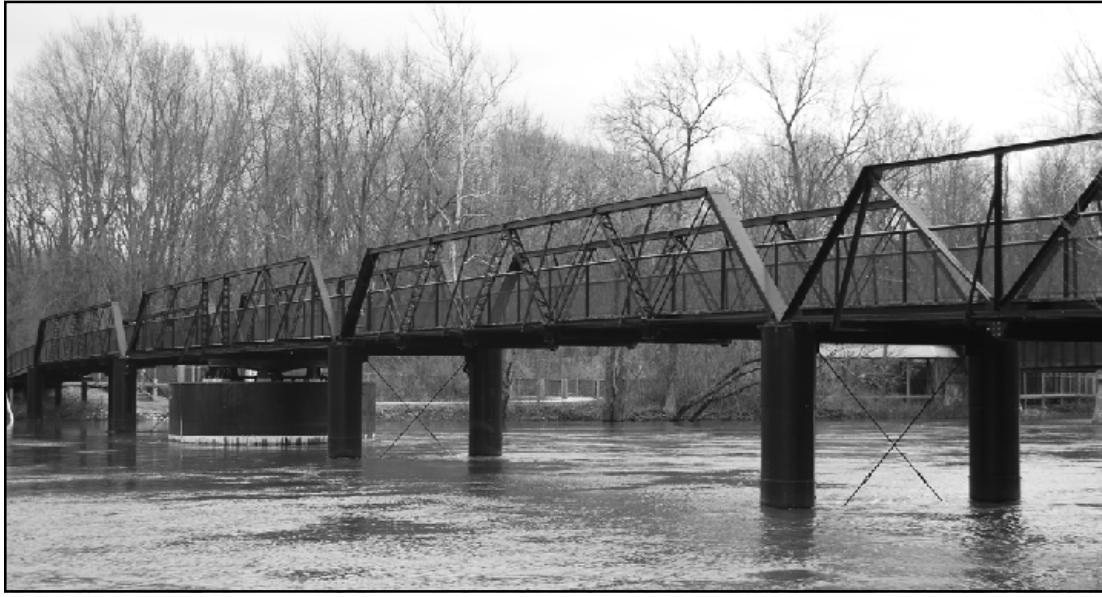
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BUILDING MICHIGAN: New Richmond's 1879 swing bridge

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

By Marty Mulcahy



SPANNING THE KALAMAZOO RIVER about eight miles east of Saugatuck, the Richmond Swing Bridge, originally constructed in 1879, may be the oldest surviving highway swing bridge in the U.S. The bridge hasn't swung open to river traffic in nearly a century, but when it did, an 89-foot center span pivoted on the 20-foot diameter central cylindrical caisson, visible at left. Photo credit: *Travel the Mitten*

Swinging bridges that are still in use in Michigan and the rest of the United States are rare. Rarer still is any bridge that's still in service, using structural iron that easily pre-dates more modern metal that would likely be expected to enjoy such longevity.

Permit us to introduce you to one such example: the New Richmond Swing Bridge in Manlius Twp, in Allegan County, aka the 57th Street Bridge. Completed in 1879 over the Kalamazoo River, the bridge has quietly and dependably served generations of travelers—and the fact that it's still in service, at least for pedestrians, is absolutely remarkable.

"This nationally significant bridge is one of the top historic bridges in Michigan," says *Historic Bridges*. "Multi-span pony truss bridges are uncommon, and this four-span structure is the longest remaining pony truss in Michigan. Pin-connected Warren truss bridges like this bridge are very rare both in Michigan and nationwide.

"The 1879 construction date makes this one of the oldest truss bridges in Michigan. Additionally, pre-1880 metal bridges are extremely rare nationwide. Each surviving example should be considered to have a high level of historic significance due to their rarity and also the fact that bridges from this period show a lack of standardization and reveal the early development of metal bridge construction in the country."

According to the application made to the *National Register for Historic Places*—upon which the bridge earned a listing: "The bridge's chief importance... is that it is one of the oldest—if not the oldest—surviving highway swing bridges in the United States."

Where it flows under the bridge about eight miles east of Saugatuck, the Kalamazoo River today is no longer the same conduit for commercial boats and barges from Lake Michigan as when the span was first erected. In fact, the bridge hasn't swung to let a boat through since about 1925, when railways and concrete roads permanently supplanted the waterway as a conduit for moving goods.

Throughout history, swing bridges were one of three major designs that allowed river craft to move past low-hanging spans. One is a drawbridge, with a single section or split dual sections of a road lifted to allow the movement of boat traffic. Another is the lift bridge, which has towers on either side of a riverbank, supporting a system that raises the entire roadway to allow boats to pass underneath.

Swing bridges, like the New Richmond span, utilize a central



ONLY 12 FEET WIDE, the bridge is closed to vehicular traffic, but pedestrians can cross. Photo credit: *Bridgehunter/C. Hanchey*

center section of the bridge balanced on top. The arrangement allows a bridge operator to swing the span open, parallel to the river, to allow river traffic passage.

The *National Register* application said the bridge's 89-foot-long center span sits atop a 20-foot diameter caisson positioned in the Kalamazoo River below the span's midpoint.

"The steel-encased caisson has a rubble stone and concrete/earth filling," the application says. "A vertical post serving as a pivot point rises from the center of the caisson, and beams extend outward from it to connect with a massive ring which rotated atop eight equally spaced rollers, which support large circle segment beams at each end of the swing span and facilitate turning the span. A system of gears operated by a bridge tender from a position atop the large midpoint caisson, allowed movement of the bridge with just a push. The gearing remains in place, but the bridge was welded in the closed position in 1979."

The *National Register* application said the 1879 bridge was a replacement for two troublesome wooden bridges built in previous decades at the site, the second of which collapsed. Even with the failures of the first wooden bridge, there was significant local opposition to an iron bridge because of the higher costs involved. There was still a significant amount of timber used in the approach spans to reduce costs.

The 20-year-old bridge was already in need of repair by 1899, and the work, including the installation of some new iron, was performed by the Saginaw Bridge Co. Other original timber structures underneath have been replaced over the years.

The *National Register* application said the bridge was constructed at a time when the lower stretch of the Kalamazoo River was considered navigable for light-draft commercial traffic. Shipping on the river declined after 1871 when the railroad was completed, but small steamers carrying passengers, freight and fruit, continued to operate between Saugatuck and New Richmond as late as 1916. "Af-



THE RICHMOND SWING BRIDGE in 1915. *Historic Bridges* noted that when the bridge was refurbished in 2005, it was dismantled "and the parts were repaired off-site before being returned to the site for reassembly. The bridge was restored in-kind and rivets were replaced with bolts, something that should be done automatically, however many states replace rivets with bolts, so this practice is worth mentioning." Photo credit: *Fenville Memories*

New RTW study re-states the law's lack of benefits

(Continued from Page 1)

politicians in Michigan (where Republicans control both chambers of the Legislature), and Virginia (where Democrats are in charge but face opposition from the conservative wing of their caucus), are pushing to repeal the RTW laws and return their states to what the study refers to as "free collective bargaining" status.

Right-to-work laws allow a worker to enjoy the benefits of a union, without paying dues, which inevitably erodes union strength.

"A growing number of leaders in both parties have recognized that 'right-to-work' laws fail to deliver any broad-based economic or social benefits," said study co-author Frank Manzo, director of policy of the Illinois Economic Policy Institute. "Indeed, the data shows that shrinking the voices of workers only serves to suppress growth and eliminate access to good, family-sustaining jobs at a time when our nation is in dire need of both."

Prospects for actual repeal this year are dim in both states, but legislation has been introduced, and supporters of repeal are pointing to many of the statistics cited in the Illinois EPI report.

According to the analysis, right-to-work states have 3 percent lower hourly wages on average, 5 percent less health insurance coverage and 8 percent less retirement security. For construction workers, the pay penalty rises to 11 percent. On average, union households earn between 10-20 percent more than nonunion households—an income premium that has been consistent since the 1930s.

Free collective-bargaining states also provide more investment in education and worker training, fewer on-the-job fatalities and faster-growing economies. Among the report's findings was that right-to-work states have 31 percent fewer registered

apprentices per 100,000 workers and 50 percent more on-the-job fatalities. Apprenticeships also grew faster in union-friendly states, providing more avenues to the middle class.

Right-to-work laws may also be hampering efforts to recover from the coronavirus. States with such laws effectively lower the bar in terms of providing livable wages and adequate health coverage, not to mention safe workplaces—all factors in a state's ability to combat the deadly virus that has claimed more than half a million U.S. lives.

"As we seek out ways to value and support the front-line workers who are keeping our communities going during these historically challenging times, there is ample evidence to suggest that right-to-work laws are having the opposite effect," said study co-author, PMCR Director and University of Illinois Professor Dr. Robert Bruno.

For those who claim that limiting collective bargaining is good for business, a state's right-to-work status didn't even crack the top 10 reasons that businesses cited as reasons to relocate. Such factors, the study authors noted, are primarily driven by other considerations like infrastructure accessibility, the availability of skilled labor and quality-of-life factors.

During a February virtual town hall, anti-union Gov. Jim Justice (R-West Virginia) put a finer point on the effectiveness of anti-union laws, admitting that right-to-work and a repeal of the state's prevailing wage have done nothing to boost his state's economy.

"Well, the bottom line to the whole thing is just really simple. We went out and passed a right-to-work law, we got rid of prevailing wage, we built fields all over the place thinking that they will come. They didn't come, did they?" Justice said, referring to the promised employers and jobs

that would be lured to the state if lawmakers betrayed its working people.

West Virginia passed right-to-work in 2016. The law was challenged in court, but ultimately upheld by the state's Supreme Court. The state repealed its prevailing wage law the same year.

"When you starve unions, you starve the working class and it hurts us all," the IBEW's Stephenson said. "Whether it's wages that keep you from needing government assistance to make ends meet, or who gets elected—and who gets to vote for them—right-to-work laws have consistently been on the losing side where working families are concerned."

Ulterior factors restrain growth

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price increases for materials—continue to give analysts pause on declaring 2021 a likely boom year for U.S. construction.

"April's data highlights the nascent recovery underway in institutional building," Dodge said. "However, given the average length of time between planning and project start, this rise will likely not impact construction starts until late 2021 or early 2022."

While construction starts are one area of industry analysis, actual spending and hiring are of much more immediate interest. The latest figures from Bureau of Labor Statistics, released May 3, show that that nonresidential construction spending fell to a two-year low in March "as contractors struggled with slumping demand for most project types and growing shortages of materials, transport, and workers," said the Associated General Contractors.

That lack of growth, the AGC reported on May 7, led to U.S. construction employment being unchanged from March to April, "as nonresidential contractors and homebuilders alike struggled to obtain materials and find enough workers."

Construction's lack of job growth last month helped bog down job growth in the overall U.S., which saw an anemic growth of only 266,000 jobs—about a quarter of what analysts anticipated.

"Contractors are experiencing unprecedented intensity and range of cost increases, supply-chain disruptions, and worker shortages that have kept firms from increasing their workforces," said Ken Simonson, the association's chief economist. "These challenges will make it difficult for contractors to rebound as the pandemic appears to wane."

U.S. construction employment in April totaled 7,452,000, matching the March total but amounting to 196,000 employees or 2.6 percent below the most recent, pre-COVID peak in February 2020. Still, the construction sector's unemployment rate fell from 16.6 percent in April 2020 to 7.7 percent last month.

But there's a major split between homebuilding and the nonresidential sector. Residential construction firms—contractors working on new housing, additions, and remodeling—gained only 3,000 employees from March to April but have added 46,000 workers or 1.6 percent over 14 months. The nonresidential sector—comprising union-heavy nonresidential building, specialty trades, and heavy and civil engineering contractors—shed 3,000 jobs in April and employed 242,000 fewer workers, or 5.2 percent less than in February 2020.

"The fact that employment has stalled—despite strong demand for new homes, remodeling of all types, and selected categories of nonresidential projects—suggests that contractors can't get either the materials or the workers they need," Simonson said. The economist noted that many firms report key materials are backlogged or rationed, while others report they are having a hard time getting former workers to return to work. He added these factors are contributing to rising costs for many contractors.

Death on the Job report: some progress made, but struggle continues

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and beef up enforcement, Shuler said.

Left unsaid: The 50-50 Senate gives anti-worker Republicans enough votes to filibuster the law labor is pushing, the Protect American Workers Act, to death.

The report itself reiterates that hope. "Fifty years after the passage of the nation's job safety laws," it says, "the toll of workplace injury, illness and death remains too high, and too many workers remain at serious risk. There is much more work to be done."

Opposition also hamstrung even collecting accurate and up-to-date job safety and health figures. Thus, both OSHA's and the federation's figures are a year or more behind. That means the agency understates the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

OSHA outbreaks were not counted by state, except for nursing homes, prisons and meatpackers and allied occupations. And the AFL-CIO gathered those.

Other report details included:

- The most dangerous states for workers were Alaska (14.1 deaths per 100,000 workers), Wyoming (12/100,000), North Dakota (9.7/100,000), Montana (7.8/100,000) and West Virginia (6.4/100,000).

- Michigan ranked No. 22 among the states in the rate of workplace fatalities, 3.6/100,000 workers. Our state experienced 164 workplace fatalities in 2019.

- The nation's most dangerous occupations were agriculture, forestry, and fishing and hunting (23.1 deaths per 100,000 workers), mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (14.6/100,000), transportation and warehousing (13.9/100,000 workers), construction (9.7/100,000) and wholesale trade (4.9/100,000).

- Agriculture and related occupations annually lead all occupations in death rates, figures in prior reports show. This report notes death rates fell—in some cases drastically—in the other most dangerous job categories, but they've barely budged in agriculture and related occupations. The death rate there 30 years ago was 24/100,000 workers.

- While the report did not say so, more so-called "right to work" states—including three of the five worst—had higher death rates for workers. The bottom 10 included Wyoming (49th from the top), North Dakota (48th) and West Virginia (46th). Other RTW states, with 50th being worst: Louisiana (44), Kansas (43) and Mississippi (41).

- OSHA doesn't cover the self-employed, meaning independent contractors, and their elevated fatality rate—13.2 per 100,000—shows it. In 2019, 1,098 such workers died on the job, one-fifth of all deaths. Wage and salary workers had a 2.9/100,000 death rate.

Just joking

A man picks up a hitchhiker on the side of the road.

The hitchhiker says, "I'm surprised you picked me up. I could've been a serial killer."

The driver responded, "Oh, please! The chance of two serial killers being in the same car is astronomical!"

...
A jewel thief enters a

house mid-afternoon. He ties up the woman and at gunpoint orders the man to hand over all the jewelry and money.

The man started sobbing and said, "You can take anything you want! You can even pistol whip me, but please untie the rope and free her!"

Thief: "You must really love your wife!"

Man: "No, but she's going to be home any minute now!"





Local 149

Roofers Local 149
DETROIT – Main Office – Southeastern Lower Michigan – Regular Membership Meeting. The regular membership meeting is scheduled for Tues, June 1, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
 The regular membership meeting will be broadcasting live on "Detroit Roofers - Radio Active" channel 88.5 on your FM dial. You must be within one mile of the Union Hall to hear the radio station. Providing that the weather is fine, we will have the regular membership meeting outside in the parking lot.
Executive Board meeting. The next Executive Board meeting is scheduled for Tues., May 25, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.
The Detroit ratified contract is as follows: 3-year contract
 • \$1.90 1st year, \$1.65 2nd year, \$1.60 3rd year, all raises are across the board.
 • Foreman pay is \$3.50 over Journeyworker pay.
 • Travel pay increase, Area 1 \$23, Area 1A \$50, Area 2 \$80, Area 3 \$90.
 • Vacation pay (\$4.45/hr) starts as soon as a member pays off their union card.
Detroit Raise Notice. \$0.67 on the check, \$0.23 to the Pension, and \$1.00 to an Annuity/Defined-Contribution Plan
Condolences. It is with great sadness and heavy hearts that we inform you of the passing of the following Brother. Brother Roger Lee, he was 64 years old and a 42-year member. Brother Lee past on 5/16/2021. Brother Roger Lee has been a Union Officer, Training Center Instructor, and the Retirees Association President. Rest in Peace Brother Lee, thank you for your years of service.
Website for announcements, news, and updates: www.rooferslocal149.com
DAD's Day. It is with great sadness that we inform you that the June DAD's Day canister drive is canceled. This was an extremely difficult decision to make. Our union will try to have an event later in the year.
Union Dues. Make sure you pay your monthly dues before the end of every month to stay in good standing. You can pay dues over the phone with a credit or debit card. Monthly dues can be taken out of your vacation check by filling out a form at the Hall (active Members only). If you have to come in to our office to pay, please understand that we are adhering to Michigan COVID19 guidelines; masks and social distancing are being enforced to protect our staff and our tenants. The mailbox is only to be used for checks and money orders, do not put cash in the mailbox. To be eligible for the International Union Burial Benefit, a member must be in continuous good standing.
 If you have any questions please feel free to call the Hall at 313-961-6093
CLEARANCE CARDS. Are you scheduled to go out of town for work in another Local's territory? Clearance cards are needed when you are sent out of town to work. Get a clearance card from the Hall and call the Local in that area to avoid fines against you.
Detroit Training Center Information. Journeyworkers upgrade classes to improve your skills, your worth, and our Brotherhood/Sisterhood is available at no cost to all Detroit LU 149 members.
 Dues must be current in order to enter the Training Center. If you are interested in any of these classes, contact Rick Baird at the Union Hall/Training Center, 810-687-1368, or midmichroofers149@gmail.com to make arrangements.
Notice. When contractors call the Union Hall for help, we need to know who is available, and have an up to date phone number. All Mid-Michigan Area members who are out of work need to call the Hall at (810) 687-1368 to be put on the out of work list.
 The publication above is as 5/17/2021, 12:30p.m.
In Solidarity, Brian Gregg Business Manager, Roofers & Waterproofer Local 149.
"The trouble with having an open mind, of course, is that people will insist on coming along and trying to put things in it."
 –Terry Pratchett
"Do not remove a fly from your friend's forehead with a hatchet."
 –Chinese Proverb
"One machine can do the work of fifty ordinary men. No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man."
 –Elbert Hubbard (1856 - 1915)
"What's the difference between a boyfriend and a husband? About 30 pounds."
 –Cindy Gardner
"If you don't risk anything you risk even more."
 –Erica Jong



Local 169 Boilermakers

Boilermakers Local 169
 ALLEN PARK – The next Union Meeting, scheduled for **Wednesday, June 9, 2021**, will be held in Area Three at IBEW 692 - 1300 West Thomas Street, Bay City, MI 48706. Please make a note of the new day. Masks are required for entry.
 The Union Hall has resumed "normal" operations with the previous safety measures in place, which include social distancing, mandatory mask use, and limited occupancy. As always, if you do not feel well, do not come to the hall.
 We are currently looking for volunteers for the Entertainment Committee in Area One to help with the picnic. In order for a safe and healthy event, more volunteers will be needed than previous picnics. Please call Jamie at the union hall if you are interested.
 Union dues for 2021 are \$49.85 per month. The union hall accepts Visa, MasterCard, and Discover. Payments can be made both at the hall and over the phone.
 OSHA 10 and OSHA 30 safety training can now be taken online. Please visit our website – www.boilermakerslocal169.com for more information.
Training Center: Journeyman wanting to obtain welding certifications are encouraged to attend training in Allen Park, in preparation for the Commonarc test currently scheduled for this August.
Apprentices: All training centers are reopening on the following dates: Area 1 – May 17, 2021; Area 2 – July 1, 2021; Area 3 – Following current outages; Area 4 – Following current outages. Your area agent will contact you with your scheduled class time.
 Sweatshirts are available for purchase for \$40.00. Payments can be made with cash, check, or credit. If you live out of the area and would like to order one, please call the hall. Additional shipping charges will be added. Baseball caps are also available. Varsity jackets are available by special order. Please contact the union hall for details.



BOB HUTSELL

Local 149 cont'd
 \$0.05 to Check-Off Dues
Mid-Michigan Training Center Information. Journey workers upgrade classes to improve your skills, your worth, and our Brotherhood/Sisterhood is available at no cost to all Mid-Michigan LU 149 members.
 Dues must be current in order to enter the Training Center. If you are interested in any of these classes, contact Rick Baird at the Union Hall/Training Center, 810-687-1368, or midmichroofers149@gmail.com to make arrangements.
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 –Erica Jong



Local 25 Iron Workers

Iron Workers Local 25

NOVI – Cut off for early Vacation check request is before 12:00 pm (NOON) Tuesday June 1, 2021 for check pick up after 2:00 pm on Thursday, June 3, 2021 at the Novi Union Hall. Call the Fringe Office 800-572-8553; Prompt 1 for member, Prompt 1 for Vacation. Anyone on Direct Deposit your Vacation check will be in your account Friday morning June 4, 2021. All other Vacation checks not scheduled for pick up will be mailed at the end of business day Tuesday June 1, 2021 and all checks are dated June 5.
May's ZOOM Union meeting will be Monday May 24, 2021 at 7 p.m. Memorial Day is Monday, May 31, 2021 and all Union Halls will be closed. We wish everyone a Safe & Happy Memorial Day!
ZOOM: If you have not yet signed up for Notifications please sign up as Notification will go out via the APP. To participate in the Zoom Union meeting is very easy ... just be sure you have downloaded our APP or signed up for our emails via our website (www.ironworkers-25.org). We are leaning toward communication through the **PUSH NOTIFICATIONS** – Please download the APP if you haven't done so yet!! Again, via our website!
CREDIT/DEBIT CARD processing for Union Dues: Comerica has changed the processing platform in compliance with new banking regulatory rules. The new platform now requires all new and existing users to authenticate themselves. Anyone who has used the prior system will need to set up brand new payment information AND will need to create a new log-in and password the first time you log in. The link is available on our website www.ironworkers25.org and cell phone APP. The NEW phone number effective 5/10/2021 is 866-635-2826. A letter was mailed on 4/20/2021 explaining all you need to know. If you have questions, please call the Union Hall or your Business Agent.
Pay union dues with personal check or money order and mail to: Iron Workers Local 25 – P.O. Box 965 – Novi, MI 48376-0965. PLEASE include your book number on the face of the check/money order. Pay union dues in person at the Novi Union Hall (**M-F from 8 am to 3 pm (NO Cash)**). After-hours use the outdoor-dues-collection box.
 Iron Workers Local 25 Annual Picnic will take place this year on Saturday, August 28, 2021. Location at the Training Center 50490 W. Pontiac Trail, Wixom MI 48393. More details to follow; Mark your calendar!
"I hate Unions!", an unrepresented Ironworker snapped at me last year. He was seriously anti-union, and ready to fight about it. I tried asking him to explain his view, but he was looking for any reason to swing at me. This is my favorite type of Ironworker to meet in the field because they are not afraid to talk about what they believe in. If I can get them to see the truth about collective bargaining, chances are good they'll be more fired up to be pro-union than they were anti-union.
That first communication is difficult, uncomfortable, and often seems pointless, but it is necessary if we want to win back non-union jobs in Michigan. It takes patience, and persistence, but



Meijer store rises in Jackson

A NEW MEIJER store in east Jackson was populated last month by Iron Workers 25 members, putting up the structural iron for Wolverine Steel. Among the iron workers were Keith Gretzer, Ed Martin and Steve Roberts.
 Photo by Marc Crance


I've seen people come around 180 degrees. After all, who doesn't want higher wages, better benefits, and a safer work environment? "It is difficult to get a man to understand something when his salary depends upon his not understanding it." –Upton Sinclair.
–In Solidarity, Your Organizer Hank Kiluk, (313) 600-8242
 IT IS MANDATORY TO WEAR A FACE MASK IF YOU VISIT ANY OF THE UNION OFFICES OR UNION HALLS.
FRINGE BENEFIT OFFICE: 800-572-8553 or 248-347-3100 and follow the prompts. Hours 7:30am to 4:30pm. The mailing address for member BENEFIT related matters is: Iron Workers Local 25 Fringe Benefit Funds, PO Box 99219, Troy MI 48099-9219. Blue Cross Health Claims and Customer Service 877-790-2583. Delta Dental Claims and Customer Service 800-482-8915.
BENEFIT FOR NEW CHILD: Any member who has a new born child, or a new dependent child through marriage **MUST NOTIFY the Fringe Benefit Office of your new dependent within 31 days; otherwise wait until the next open-enrollment period (April 1-April30). A birth certificate will be required.**
BENEFIT FOR LIFE CHANGE: Any member experiencing a divorce or a new spouse **MUST NOTIFY the Fringe Benefit Office within 31 days; otherwise wait until the next open-enrollment period (April 1-April30). A Marriage certificate will be required.**

Stewards' Notes:
 1) STW Meetings cancelled until further notice.
 2) The link for Online Steward Report forms is found in the upper right-hand corner of our website www.ironworkers25.org LOG-IN DIRECTIONS will follow once you click the link that reads "Electronic Steward Reports" These forms are much easier than the paper forms, we encourage you to give it a try if you have not yet done so.
 3) PLEASE BE SURE TO CHECK dues for members and boomers too AND BE SURE ALL BOOMERS HAVE SIGNED BOTH THE RECIPROCAL AND THE ASSESSMENT-TARGETING
 4) All members please be sure to keep your Union dues paid up to date as it is criteria for working. You can be asked to leave the jobsite if your dues are not current.
 MUST Safety now has an APP. Download from the APP store or google play. Search key word "MUST SAFETY."
New Apprentice Applications are being accepted BUT you MUST go to ironworkers25.org, print the application, gather documentation then phone the school for an appointment; no walk-in foot traffic. The Wixom Training Center – Phone: 248-960-2130.
Apprentices: Fill out your monthlies online at the website or mobile app located under the apprenticeship tab "Monthly Report Sign-In," this gives you the ability to electronically submit your monthlies. Also located under the apprenticeship tab you will find "Evaluation Form" Journeyman/Supervision can use this to submit apprentice evaluations using computer/cell phone and submit electronically.
Please also note, you must check your email on a regular basis; we now email your annual MUST drug screen paperwork and your pay raise slips.
To view classes at the Local 25 Apprenticeship School, please go the ironworkers25.org to view the block schedule; we are practicing social distancing protocols, etc. Due to the high volume of apprentices doing their make-up days, we are limiting the number to 10 per day. Please call the school to make up days **Do not just show up and expect to be allowed to stay.**
 The Novi retirees Board of Directors will meet on Tuesday, June 1, 2021 in Novi at 9:00 am. The Novi retiree meeting will be Tuesday, June 1, 2021 at 10:00 am. Watch for updates at (www.ironworkers25.org) or the Local 25 app that you can download by searching "Iron Workers Local 25" to stay informed on union matters.
 Jim Hamric started up breakfast on the last Friday of the month at Mom's Restaurant 9:00 am. Located 2691 Fort St, Trenton, MI 48183. All are welcome!
To all Union Members: Please be safe in this pandemic!
 This information is as of Submission Time for this Article (05/17/2021 12:00 pm E.S.T.).



Local 8 Iron Workers

Iron Workers Local 8
 Tim Roman
 Business Representative
MARQUETTE – WELD CERTIFICATIONS: Weld certifications are being held on a scheduled basis. Please contact Rich Hanson at the Apprenticeship office for more information. 414-476-9372.
MEMBERSHIP MEETING: It is the intent of Iron Workers Local #8 to tentatively resume in-person Membership Meetings. The next meeting will be held on June 23rd, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. CST. Local #8 will stay in compliance with governmental guidance of social distancing and capacity limits. Due to this limitation, our plan is to continue a virtual broadcast of the meeting in conjunction with in-person attendance. Members can gain access to the meeting at https://meeting.iwl8.org on the afternoon of the meeting.
MINE SAFETY TRAINING: A 24-Hour MSHA Class will be held on June 3rd, 4th, and 5th, 2021, at 8:30 a.m., at the Operators' Hall, 802 Clark Drive, Gladstone, Michigan. To sign up for this class, contact Ann Lakenen at the Pipefitters #111, at 906-226-6511. The next MSHA Refresher Class will be held on June 19th, 2021, at 8:30 a.m. via Zoom. To sign up for this class, and provide your email address, please contact Ann Lakenen at Pipefitters #111, 906-226-6511.
If you sign up for MSHA classes and do not attend or cancel, you will be charged a fee of \$30.00 and will be suspended from any further Mine Safety classes until the fee is paid.
IRON WORKERS LOCAL #8 ONLINE STORE: Check out Local #8's SWAG at the online store at iwl8.org.
"Adversity has ever been considered the state in which a man most easily becomes acquainted with himself."
 – Samuel Johnson (1709 - 1784)



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To each of our Members, Clients and Vendor partners impacted by COVID-19, our thoughts are with you. Rest assured knowing that BeneSys is working hard on your behalf while we navigate these difficult circumstances together.

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Michigan Painters
District Council

WARREN – Dear Members,
DC1M WEBSITE: www.iupatdc1michigan.org
DC1M FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/iupat1m
DC 1M UNION CARDS* Any questions regarding a lost, damaged Union cards, or have dues inquiries or have not received a card please contact the DC1M offices at:

Warren Office: (586)552-4474 extension 100
Freeland Office: (989)695-6888
FULL TIME POSITION OPENING FOR FTI APPRENTICESHIP- LANSING FACILITY The FTI of the Great Lakes Michigan Apprenticeship is looking to fill a full time instructor position at the FTI Lansing Facility. Any interested candidates please contact FTI Training Director Shawn O'neill at (517) 304-4425 or email dot@iupatdc1m.org

D-BAR-A BOY SCOUT CAMP ANNUAL MIX FIX 2021 SUCCESS Thank you to all DC 1M Members who participated in the 2021 D Bar A Mix Fix. We had over 100 Brothers and Sisters participate to help beautify the Boy Scout Camp.

PAINTERS DISTRICT COUNCIL 1M SMART PHONE APP. Painters District Council 1M is pleased to announce its' all new APP. For IPHONE go to IOS store,

For ANDROID got to Google Playstore
Search for "Painters and Allied Trades" download APP
Username: your member id#
Password: painters

With this APP you can access training classes, Local Union meeting times and dates, receive alerts, and communications from your Union, etc.

GET INVOLVED AND PARTICIPATE IN YOUR UNION!
OUT OF WORK/ BACK TO WORK: To keep work placement efficient, please notify the office when you are laid off or going back to work.

Warren office# is 586-552-4474 or Freeland office# is 989-695-6888. New job starts should be reported to the Union office, please do so

Get involved. Work smart. Work safe.



District Council 1M

Business Manager: Robert Gonzalez

Meeting date: 2nd Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m., with the Executive Board meeting at 6 p.m.
Place: 14587 Barber Ave, Warren MI 48088 & 419 S. Washington Ave, Lansing MI 48933

Local Union 312

Business Rep: Tim Schwerin
Meeting date: 2nd Wednesday of every month at 6:30 p.m.
Place: 1473 N. 30th St., Galesburg, MI 49053

Local Union 514

Business Rep: Scott Mikulen
Meeting dates: 1st Wednesday of every month at 7:30 p.m.
Place: 7920 Jackson Road, Ann Arbor, MI

Local Union 826

Business Rep: Rocky Ackerman
Meeting date: 2nd Thursday of every month at 5:30 p.m.
Place: 3115 Joyce St. Burton, MI 48529

Local Union 845

Business Rep – Fred Frederickson
Meeting date: 1st Thursday of every month at 7 p.m.
Place: 419 S. Washington Avenue, Lansing, MI 48933

Local Union 1052

Business Rep – Jake Fluty
Meeting date: The Fourth Wednesday of every month at 6:30 p.m.
Place: 3115 Joyce St., Burton MI 48529

Local Union 1803

Business Rep: Josh Ovalle
Meeting date: 4th Tuesday of every month at 5:30 p.m.
Place: 7677 Midland Road, Freeland, MI 48623.

Local Union 2352

Business Rep: Jeremy Haviland
Meeting Date: 3rd Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m.
Place: District Council 1M, 14587 Barber Ave., Warren, MI.

Local Union 2353

Business Rep: Keith Anderson
Meeting date: 3rd Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m.
Place: District Council 1M, 14587 Barber Ave, Warren, MI.

WARREN – Our next regular scheduled union meeting will be on Monday June 7, 2021 at 6pm. We will be voting on delegates to the district council at this meeting.

Work remains steady in the area. There is lots of school work coming up this summer. That being said, we will be busy.

Brother Tony Meyers passed away on May 10th. Brother Dennis Roberts passed away on May 13th. Please keep them both in your thoughts and prayers.

Keep your working status current; this helps protect your benefits. If you have a mailing address and/or telephone number change, please notify the Union and Fund Offices of the changes.

Dues payments may be mailed to the Union Office at 14587 Barber Avenue, Warren, MI 48088. Make checks payable to: DISTRICT COUNCIL 1M in care of Glassworkers #357.

When traveling to work out

(Continued next column)

of town, all members are reminded that they must check in with the local that you are working in as per the International Constitution and our local C.B.A.

The Fund Office address is Michigan Glass and Glazing Joint Funds, P.O. Box 966, Troy, MI 48098-0666; phone number: 248-641-4957; fax 248-813-9898.

If you are in need of safety modules, please contact your employer if you are employed or the union office @ 586-552-4478, if you're not. Any questions call the hall or call the Council @ 586-552-4474. Participation is very important to keep your union strong, so try to make it to a meeting.

-Business Rep- Don Stepp



Building for Beaumont

DRYWALLING AN ELEVATOR lobby at the Beaumont-Lenox Twp. Outpatient Campus are (l-r) Enrique Guillen and Guillermo Guillen of Michigan Painters District Council 1-M. They're employed by Denn-Co. Construction. The soon-to-open facility brings a new option for a full slate of health care services to northeast Macomb County in a three-story, 109,650-square-foot building erected near the intersection of I-94 and 26 Mile Rd. Roncelli is managing the project.



Michigan Painters Mix, and Fix

Another year, another successful "Mix-Fix" weekend effort to help fix and maintain the facilities at the D-Bar-A Boy Scout Ranch in Metamora. Volunteers from the Michigan Painters District Council 1-M spent the day on Saturday, May 8 fixing doors, repairing screens and painting cabins. It's a traditional destination for the Painters Union, which has been volunteering a day each springtime for more than two decades to help to refurbish the camp. Thank you to everyone who gave their time to give back to the community!

Photo credits: Painters District Council 1M



Local 357, con't

WARREN - Our next regular scheduled union meeting will be on Monday June 7, 2021 at 6pm. We will be voting on delegates to the district council at this meeting.

Work remains steady in the area. There is lots of school work coming up this summer. That being said, we will be busy.

Brother Tony Meyers passed away on May 10th. Brother Dennis Roberts passed away on May 13th. Please keep them both in your thoughts and prayers.

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When traveling to work out

(Continued next column)

"There is no safety in numbers, or in anything else."
- James Thurber (1894 - 1961)

"O, it is excellent to have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous to use it like a giant."
- William Shakespeare (1564 - 1616)

"I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish humble tasks as though they were great and noble. The world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker."
- Helen Keller (1880 - 1968)

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of town, all members are reminded that they must check in with the local that you are working in as per the International Constitution and our local C.B.A.

The Fund Office address is Michigan Glass and Glazing Joint Funds, P.O. Box 966, Troy, MI 48098-0666; phone number: 248-641-4957; fax 248-813-9898.

If you are in need of safety modules, please contact your employer if you are employed or the union office @ 586-552-4478, if you're not. Any questions call the hall or call the Council @ 586-552-4474. Participation is very important to keep your union strong, so try to make it to a meeting.

-Business Rep- Don Stepp



Outdoors

Catching fish eggs



By Scott Heintzelman, Aaron Switzer and Joe Micekevich
Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Have you ever wondered where those salmon and trout the Michigan Department of Natural Resources stocks in the Great Lakes and tributaries come from?

Before they hatch into fry (very young fish), before they grow to stocking size and before they leave the stocking truck, the eggs of these fish must be collected by DNR Fisheries Division personnel.

The Little Manistee River Weir and Egg Collection Facility, located on the beautiful Little Manistee River just outside of Manistee in Manistee County, is the place where this story originates.

For over 50 years, workers at the Little Manistee facility have collected eggs from Chinook salmon and steelhead, two very important and popular gamefish species.

The egg-take facility was constructed in 1967 and began operations in 1968 to meet the growing interest in fishing for salmon and steelhead – two non-native species introduced previously to the Great Lakes. This site on the Little Manistee River was chosen based on its proximity to Lake Michigan and its ideal spawning habitat that already supported natural reproduction of steelhead (lake or ocean-going rainbow trout).

In the late 60s and early 70s, the introduction of coho and Chinook salmon revitalized Great Lakes fisheries that were depleted by invasive sea lamprey and alewife, commercial fishing and habitat degradation that had occurred over time.

Beginning in 1968 and continuing through today, the Little Manistee egg-take facility has operated as the primary source for Chinook salmon eggs, and the sole source for steelhead eggs, for these two fish-stocking programs.

The facility operates from about mid-March to May to collect eggs from steelhead that spawn in the river each spring. Mid-September through October, the facility staff collects eggs



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT of Natural Resources staffers work to sort fish for spawning at the Little Manistee River Weir and Egg Collection Facility in Manistee County.

from Chinook salmon that spawn in the fall.

In 2019, the facility got much-needed upgrades, including replacing most of its mechanical and concrete infrastructure and adding efficiencies such as LED lighting and pump improvements.

Over the last 50 years, there has been only one time the facility and staff were unable to fulfill the egg quota for the steelhead program. In the spring of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic was still in its early stages, and the many unknowns at the time resulted in the painful decision to suspend spring egg-take operations out of an abundance of caution.

For the fall Chinook salmon operations, return-to-work protocols were in place. These same protocols were in place for the 2021 spring steelhead operation, allowing staff to meet the needs of this important program while safely working together.

The Little Manistee Weir and Egg Collection Facility and grounds includes several important components that provide a way to capture and hold fish and allow staff to collect and fertilize eggs and to release or harvest fish.

The process begins with the weir structure itself. The weir is basically a temporary dam that blocks fish from migrating upstream but does not impound water in the way a traditional dam



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT of Natural Resources fisheries technician Ed Barr works with collected fish eggs at the Wolf Lake State Fish Hatchery.

MDNR photos

would. The other major component of the facility is a fish ladder leading to a raceway that connects to several ponds. The ponds, raceway and fish ladder are all flooded using large pumps that pump water from the river channel that circulates throughout the facility and down the fish ladder.

The flow of water through the facility attracts fish congregated below the weir up the fish ladder and into holding ponds. Chinook salmon and steelhead on their spawning run instinctively move upstream to seek out spawning habitat. This instinct

leads them into the facility. Once a significant number of fish have been collected in ponds, egg-take operations can begin.

A typical day of egg take begins with a significant amount of planning and preparation. First, the quota of eggs to meet the stocking requests of the program, including enough surplus stock to allow for changes in stocking numbers and losses during the rearing process, must be determined. This gives staffers who conduct the egg collection an idea of how many days the operation will take and the staffing level nec-

essary to complete the work.

There is also a detailed protocol created and revised annually that describes the process required to fertilize, disinfect and prepare the eggs for the trip from the weir to the hatchery.

Once these steps are determined, it is time to bring in the fish. Fish are moved from the large holding ponds by opening the pond doors and using a machine called a crowder to slowly push them into the main raceway.

From there, the fish are slowly pushed into the spawning building and lifted by a basket into a tank where fish are anesthetized for handling. The fish are then taken out of the basket and put onto a sorting table where ripeness can be checked, and males and females are separated. The ripe males are gently squeezed so milt, or sperm, can be collected in a small receptacle. Eggs are removed from ripe females by adding compressed air into the body cavity with a small needle.

In the steelhead egg collection process, spawned fish are moved to a recovery tank outside the building before being released upstream. Steelhead do not necessarily die after spawning and can spawn more than once in their life cycle.

In contrast, Chinook salmon only spawn once during their life cycle and then die, so fish that have been spawned are then harvested and sold by a state contractor. During both egg collection operations, males and females are put in individual buckets for fertilization. Eggs are then combined in large egg buckets to finish preparation for transport.

When the buckets of fertilized eggs leave the Little Manistee River Weir facility, they go to a DNR fish hatchery, where they are counted and placed in incubators. This begins the fish's journey through the hatching and early rearing process.

The fish are kept in the hatcheries until they begin the visible smolting process, when physiological changes occur as these migratory fish begin homing in on their surroundings, which will determine where they return to spawn.

The clearly visible part of the smolting process is the shedding of the camouflaged (with parr marks) scales that help conceal the fish while in rivers and streams. These scales are replaced with bright silvery scales as they migrate down rivers to the Great Lakes.

This occurs after only six months for Chinook salmon, while steelhead are in the hatchery for about one year. Stocking fish during the smolting process assists biologists in predicting where the fish may return to spawn.

The Little Manistee River Weir facility and grounds is also a great place to visit. Egg-take operations are usually open to the public (apart from recent COVID-19 restrictions) and allow visitors to see these amazing fish and the process of harvesting their eggs up close. Weir tours, combined with education and outreach efforts, bring hundreds of students to the Little Manistee Weir every year to learn about the life cycle of fish, invasive species, the history of salmon in the Great Lakes and the DNR programs that manage and sustain these prized fisheries.

In 2012, the DNR partnered with the Manistee Explore the Shores Program to add universally accessible amenities at the site, including paved pathways around the grounds that offer a self-guided tour with informational signage, a large observation deck below the weir structure, handicap parking spaces and Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant pit toilets. This work was made possible by a grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund.

If you would like to visit the weir, check out dates of operation and more at Michigan.gov/Hatcheries.



AND HERE'S WHAT FISH EGGS BECOME: Olen Gannon, Michigan Department of Natural Resources fisheries technician at the Harrietta Field Office, is shown with a 20-pound steelhead.

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