

THE BUILDING TRADESMAN

Official Publication of the Michigan Building and Construction Trades Council



VOL. 69, NO. 18

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September 4, 2020

SHORT CUTS

Time to request your absentee ballot

No need to stand in line at the polls on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 3. Request your absentee ballot today.

Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson on Aug. 20 reminded voters that the application period to request an absentee voter ballot has begun.

All registered voters can apply for an absent voter ballot and may do so by filling out an online form at Michigan.gov/Vote and providing information including their driver's license or state ID card number and the last four digits of their Social Security number.

Alternatively, voters may print out an application form from the site and send it, or a written, signed request for a ballot, to their clerk. They can mail their request, email a scan or photo of it or deliver it in person. Voters can find their clerk's contact information at Michigan.gov/Vote.

"With a record-breaking number of absentee ballots cast in our August primary, Michigan voters have made their desire to vote from home abundantly clear," said Benson. "They recognize and trust that it is a safe, secure and convenient way to participate in our democracy, and we will continue doing all we can to ensure voters understand their rights and how to exercise them ahead of November."

Local clerks will begin mailing out regular absent voter ballots on Sept. 24. The ballots will be available for early, in-person voting in clerks' offices on that date as well.

Voters applying for absent voter ballots online or through the mail should do as soon as possible. After Oct. 19, voters are advised to go to their clerk's office in person if possible, where they can receive their ballot and vote it while they are there.

With COVID, NLRB nods to employers

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), all appointees of President Trump, recently released a series of decisions regarding COVID-19, the first guidance that the board has given since the pandemic started in March.

In a series of five memos to their regional directors the NLRB instructed them to dismiss various cases regarding COVID-19-related charges against employers. The board concluded that an employer is not obligated to engage in midterm bargaining regarding union proposals for paid sick leave and hazard pay because of the ongoing pandemic. They also said that an employer does not have to bargain about a temporary closure.

In regards to workers speaking up about a dangerous situation on the job, the board has decided that an individual speaking out about a company's COVID safety procedure is not protected speech. This means that they can be fired by their employer. This guidance came after a case was filed by a nurse who was fired after for refusing to work at a nursing home that was requiring workers to share isolation gowns.

This decision gives employers much more freedom into unilaterally creating work standards during COVID-19, and gives employers significantly more latitude for forcing workers into possibly dangerous workplace situations.

-Brian Young, UComm Blog

Quotable

"Someone struggled for your right to vote. Use it."
-Susan B. Anthony, 1820-1906



MORE THAN 1,300 tons of steel have been placed this year at the Lansing Board of Water and Light's Delta Energy Park, and the 250-megawatt power plant's structure was topped out on Aug. 6.
Photo credit: Barton Malow video capture

The iron is up at Delta Energy Park

By Marty Mulcahy
Editor

LANSING – The Lansing Power Constructors Team, Redinger Steel and members of Iron Workers Local 25 and Operating Engineers Local 324 celebrated the topping out of the Delta Energy Park while honoring five engineering contractors who died in a plane crash last fall en route to visiting the site.

The topping out of the final structural beam was held Aug. 6, marking the installation of the last of some 1,330 tons of steel at the site of the new 250-megawatt power plant. Barton Malow and Clark Construction are a joint venture comprising the Lansing Power Constructors and are the Lansing Board of Water and Light's lead contractors on the project.

Five stars affixed to the final beam commemorated the five occupants of a downed plane leased by The Engineering Collaborative, a mechanical contracting consulting firm in Indianapolis working with the BWL on the project. Five of the
(Continued on Page 11)



REDINGER STEEL iron workers set up the final beam for placement at the Delta Energy Park project.
Photo credit: Marc Crance

Michigan construction starts to succumb to COVID's weight

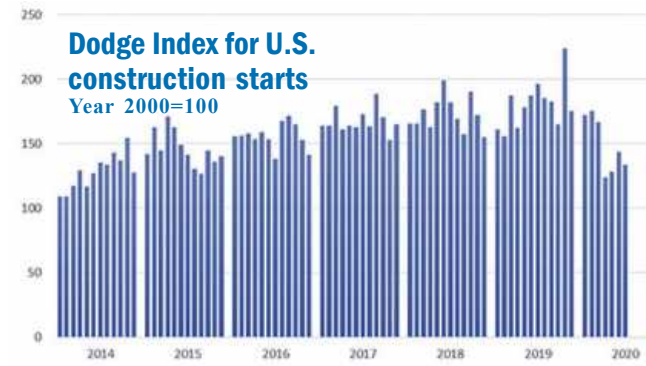
Construction employment in Michigan is holding its own, but the burden of COVID-19 is likely becoming too heavy to retain its momentum.

Since Gov. Gretchen Whitmer reopened the state's construction industry last spring after a six-week shutdown in response to the pandemic, Michigan has enjoyed a too-good-to-be-true resurgence in building activity. In May and June, the state was among the leaders in U.S. construction activity, with many Michigan localities ranking among the top spots in terms of building employment.

But July's numbers, released Aug. 21 by the Associated General Contractors of America, show the employment gears slipping a bit in Michigan and elsewhere, as our state joins the slogging construction economy that's plaguing just about the entire nation. It is widely believed that much of Michigan's busy spring and summer have been brought about by pent-up demand, plus the ongoing construction of new

power plants in St. Clair and Ingham counties and automotive work in the Detroit area.

"Renewed outbreaks of coronavirus in numerous states likely caused many project owners and investors to pull back on planned construction," said Ken
(Continued on Page 3)



Union members continue to enjoy wage premium

The union advantage persists.

A report issued Aug. 25 by the labor-backed Economic Policy Institute finds that unionized workers earn on average 11.2 percent more in wages than their nonunion peers (workers in the same industry and occupation with similar education and experience).

The findings reflect a nearly

century-old trend that shows union workers consistently out-earning nonunion workers. However, another persistent trend is flat and falling union representation over the past several decades: in 2019, only one in nine U.S. workers were covered by a union contract, even as 48 percent of all nonunion workers who say they would vote for a union if given the opportunity.

"Now, more than ever, we need strong labor laws to protect working people from the health and economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic," said Lynn Rhinehart, EPI Senior Fellow and one of the report's authors. "We need policymakers to use their power to halt and reverse the four-decades-old trend of rising inequality, while also creating meaningful reforms that

help workers organize unions."

And in this era of increased spotlight of racial injustice, the EPI's research shows that unionized black workers (+13.7 percent) and Hispanic workers (+20.1 percent) both enjoy a greater wage advantage over their nonunion peers.

Additionally, 94 percent of workers covered by a union contract have access to employer-
(Continued on Page 2)

No 'fail jail' this time

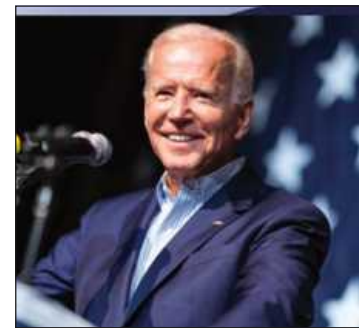
DETROIT – On the rise along I-75 in Detroit, is Wayne County's new Criminal Justice Center – which includes two modern jails and much more.

Under project manager Barton Malow, five structures are going up at the site north of Warren, comprising more than 1 million square feet. Included are the Adult Detention Center (504,406 square feet); the Juvenile Detention Center (128,681 square feet); courthouse (253,178 square feet); central utility plant (32,888 square feet) and administrative building (119,623 square feet).

Construction began in 2018 on the new \$533 million criminal justice complex, and the project is expected to be complete in 2022. The entire development includes an agreement with Rock Ventures
(Continued on Page 2)



LOOKING EAST along I-75 is the new Wayne County Criminal Justice Center. Three of the five buildings at the site that are furthest along in construction are (l-r) the adult detention facility, the courthouse and the administration building.



Joe Biden vs. Donald Trump



Ten building trades unions have endorsed Biden. Here's why.

He 'will protect our ability to fight for fair wages and benefits, while helping us win more work'

By Marty Mulcahy
Editor

Donald Trump vs. Joe Biden.

Once again this year on the first Tuesday in November, America goes to the polls to pick a president, and once again building trades union leaders and the rest of organized labor recommend a candidate for president who will work in the best interests of union members.

The AFL-CIO, comprised of 55 unions representing 12.5 million members, endorsed Democrat Biden in May. And throughout this year, Biden has also been endorsed by all the building trades unions that have issued endorsements, including the Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers, Cement Masons, Iron Workers, Heat and Frost Insulators, IBEW, Painters and Allied Trades, Sheet Metal Workers, and the United Association of Plumbers, Pipe Fitters,

Sprinkler Fitters and Teamsters.

Compared to the other unions, the United Association on Aug. 17 issued the most extensive defense we've seen justifying its decision to endorse Biden, rather than Trump or remaining neutral. And issues that affect the UA nearly universally line up with those of other building trades unions.

UA General President Mark McManus said the UA's general officers and Political Engagement Committee (PEC) – comprised of business managers, business agents, journeymen and journeywomen and apprentices from across the country – met frequently over the past two years and began discussions for a possible presidential endorsement earlier this year.

He said the PEC established four main policy areas to evaluate the candidates "on the most important issues facing UA
(Continued on Page 3)

AFL-CIO's Trumka: Dems' plan 'is the most pro-union platform I've seen in my 50 years'

By Mark Gruenberg
PAI Staff Writer

As they head into the home stretch of the 2020 campaign, national Democrats "have to pay attention to working people" to win this fall, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka says.

And presidential nominee Joe Biden, who was formally approved by the party's virtual convention roll call on Au-

gust 18 "gets it," Trumka declares.

"He's always been a blue-collar guy and he's still a blue-collar chief added. Trumka gave that analysis, and a critique of what 2016 nominee Hillary Clinton didn't do, in a 35-minute interview with Jonathan Capehart of the *Washington Post* before the rollcall that evening at the Democratic National Convention. The interview is one of a series the paper has run for weeks with analysts, newsmakers and politicians both before and during the conclave.

Trumka was the sole union leader in the week's 20-person convention-oriented lineup. The wrap-up on Aug. 20, before Biden's convention acceptance speech that night, featured House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Biden's last presidential primary foe, Sen. Bernie Sanders, Ind.-Vt., who has enthusiastically endorsed the former vice president.

Going into the rollcall, Biden has advantages Clinton lacked. Public opinion polls show a
(Continued on Page 13)



AFL-CIO President Rich Trumka

Viewpoints



GOP's anti-worker platform

The Republican Party's 2020 "platform" has almost nothing for workers. Because, technically, there's not a platform at all. Instead, there's a two-page 355-word statement issued by President Donald Trump. In simple phrases of few words each, he describes what he would push if voters return him to the White House on Nov. 3.

And for the rest, the GOP Convention's Executive Committee decided, voters should consult the document adopted in the party convention in Cleveland four years ago. That platform had few worker-oriented provisions, too – and most of them were negative.

The contrast between the two parties is terrific. The detailed 2020 Democratic platform, unveiled about two weeks before, is the strongest pro-worker platform in 50 years, says AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, a drafting committee member.

It strongly endorses the Protect The Right To Organize (Pro) Act, the deepest pro-worker labor law since the original 1935 National Labor Relations Act. The Democratic platform also backs first responders' right to organize and bargain in all states. Several, notably Texas and especially North Carolina, now ban such bargaining.

Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden goes farther. The Pro Act would increase fines for labor-law breaking, enact card-check recognition and mandate arbitration when the two sides can't agree on first contracts, among other pro-worker provisions. Biden advocates "perp walks" – jail – for chronic labor law-breaking corporate honchos, too.

And Biden would use the billions of dollars the government hands out in private-sector contracts yearly to enforce worker rights. Break that proposed law, which mandates bidders must obey federal labor, environmental and tax laws, Biden and his platform say, and you can't chase federal dollars, either.

Without a platform, the GOP's 336 delegates opened their meeting in Charlotte, N.C., on Aug. 24 by re-nominating Trump. More than 2,100 other delegates and speakers participated by zoom, but not Trump. He strode on stage midway through the rollcall and delivered an unscripted 60-minute diatribe against the Democrats, Biden and other targets.

His document, entitled in boldface "President Trump – Fighting for You!", was issued the day before the convention opened. It had few specifics and many gauzy promises. For instance, Trump promised to create 10 million new jobs in the U.S. in the first 10 months of 2021. He didn't say how. Ditto for creating one million new small businesses.

And Trump pledged to "Cut Taxes to Boost Take-Home Pay and Keep Jobs in America, Enact Fair Trade Deals that Protect American Jobs" and enact "Made in America Tax Credits." The capitalization is his. So is the lack of detail.

Trump did not say who would benefit from his next tax cut. He made a similar promise for the 2017 Trump-GOP \$1.7 trillion tax cut. Non-partisan analysts found at least 83 percent went to corporations and the 1 percent, leaving many big firms with little to nothing to pay. Millions of middle-class and working-class people got hit with tax hikes, especially in "blue" states.

And Trump's two-page paper included slams at China. He proposed "Banning Federal Contracts For Companies Who Outsource To China," and promised he would "Bring Back One Million Manufacturing Jobs From China." This time he said how: Giving the companies both tax credits and 100 percent expensing deductions for buying new equipment.

Trump's paper also embraced some key points affecting workers: "We should reduce the occupational licensing laws that shut untold millions of potential workers out of entrepreneurial careers. We must overturn the regulatory nightmare, created by the Dodd-Frank law," enacted after financiers caused the 2008 Great Recession, that 2016 platform says.

• Trump's two-pager actually goes even farther than that. He would "End Government Bullying Of U.S. Citizens And Small Businesses" and "Continue Deregulatory Agenda For Energy Independence."

• The GOP's 2016 platform also promised to "challenge the anachronistic labor laws that limit workers' freedom and lock them into the workplace rules of their great-grandfathers." That again was code for enacting so-called right to work laws and weakening federal labor law protections.

"Instead of facilitating change, the current administration and its agents at the National Labor Relations Board are determined to reverse it," that GOP platform said. "They are wielding provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act from the 1930s, designed to fit a manufacturing workplace, to deny flexibility to both employers and employees."

Reversing labor law protections, at least, is one 2016 platform promise the solely Trump-named three all-GOP NLRB is carrying out.

That incorporated 2016 platform also advocated enacting so-called "merit pay," which bosses control, and banning Project Labor Agreements on federally funded construction. It demanded cuts in federal workers' pay, pensions and other benefits. "A Republican administration should streamline personnel procedures to expedite the firing of bad workers, tax cheats, and scammers," it said. And it demanded congressional labor committees "review" – code word for "outlaw" – federal worker unions.

Mark Gruenberg
Press Associates International Staff Writer
Washington, D.C.

No shock absorbers

By Jim Hightower

In this horrible time of economic collapse, it is truly touching to see so many corporate chieftains reaching out in solidarity with the hard-hit working class.

We know they're doing this because they keep telling us they are – practically every brand-name giant has been spending millions of dollars on PR campaigns in recent weeks asserting that they're standing with us, declaring over and over: "We're all in this together." Except, of course, they're really not standing anywhere near us.

While we're waiting in endless lines at food banks and unemployment offices, the elites are still getting fat paychecks and platinum-level health care. The severity and gross disparity of our country's present economic collapse is not simply caused by a sudden viral outbreak, but by a decades-long plutocratic policy of intentionally maximizing profits for the rich and minimizing everyone else's wellbeing. As the eminent economist Joseph Stiglitz rightly put it, "We built an economy with no shock absorbers."

Jobs, once the measure of a family's economic security, have steadily been shriveled to low-wage unreliable work, untethered to a fair share (or any share) of the new wealth that workers create. In a relentless push for exorbitant, short-term profits, today's executives have abandoned any pretense that a corporation is a community of interdependent interests striving to advance the common good. Instead, while the honchos are richly covered, they're washing their hands of any responsibility for the health, retirement, and other essential needs of their workforce. "Rely on food stamps, Obamacare, and other publicly-funded programs," they say, even as their lobbyists and for-sale lawmakers slash the public safety nets so rich shareholders and speculators can take evermore profit.

These forces of American greed have shoved millions of working families to the economic precipice – and all it takes is a virus to push them over.

(via www.otherwords.org)



No 'fail jail' this time for Wayne County

(Continued from Page 1)

to build a new mixed-use technical and research development on the site of the defunct Gratiot Street "fail jail" near Greektown, which was plagued by county mismanagement and cost overruns before being abandoned after significant construction took place several years ago.

The new jails and criminal justice center will replace an aging and outmoded Frank Murphy Hall of Justice, also near Detroit's Greektown.

Also at the site, DTE Energy Services will construct and operate a central utility plant for the new criminal justice center on East Warren Ave. The plant will distribute hot and cold water for heating and cooling and also to distribute electricity and gas throughout the criminal justice center.



LABORER Reginald Miller of Local 1191 works traffic guidance on the Russell Street entrance to the Wayne County Detention Center, under construction in Detroit.

Union members continue to enjoy wage premium

(Continued from Page 1)

sponsored health benefits, compared to just 68 percent of non-union workers. The researchers found that 91 percent of workers covered by a union contract have access to paid sick days, compared with 73 percent of non-union workers.

"The right to a union is a racial justice issue, as well as an economic justice issue," said Celine McNicholas, EPI's Director of Government Affairs and one of the report's authors. "Unions help shrink the black-white wage gap, due to the dual facts that black workers are more

"Have more than thou showest; Speak less than thou knowest."

—William Shakespeare (1564 - 1616)

"The only thing you take with you when you're gone is what you leave behind."

—John Allston

"Adam and Eve had many advantages, but the principle one was that they escaped teething."

—Mark Twain (1835 - 1910)

The Building Tradesman welcomes your letters to the editor. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and to shorten them. Please sign the letter and include a way to contact you.

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likely than white workers to be represented by a union, and black workers who are in unions get a larger boost to wages from being in a union than white workers do. Unions also provide a crucial voice to workers in which they can address issues of discrimination and inequities at their workplace."

The report's authors explain that a badly broken system governing collective bargaining has eroded unions and worker power more broadly, contributing to both the suffering during the pandemic and the extreme economic inequality exacerbated by the pandemic. Despite efforts to push policy reforms, the U.S. entered the COVID-19 pandemic with a weak system of labor protections.

As a result, working people, particularly low-wage workers—who are disproportionately women and workers of color—have largely borne the costs of the pandemic. While providing the "essential" services our economy relies on, many of these workers, the EPI study said, have been forced to work without protective gear, have no access to paid sick leave, and when workers have spoken up about health and safety concerns they have been fired.

"When union density is high, nonunion workers benefit, because unions effectively set broader standards – including higher wages," the study said, "that nonunion employers must meet in order to attract and retain the workers they need (and to avoid facing a union organizing drive themselves). The combination of the direct effect of unions on union members and this

'spillover' effect to nonunion workers means unions are crucial in raising wages for working people and reducing income inequality."

The authors – who also include EPI's Director of Policy Heidi Shierholz, Policy Associate Margaret Poydock, and Research Assistant Daniel Perez – recommend a slate of federal and state policy reforms to promote workers' collective power and grow union density.

The Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act is a comprehensive set of reforms that would close loopholes in the nation's labor law and strengthen workers' rights to organize. Additionally, their recommendations in-

clude passing the Public Sector Freedom to Negotiate Act and the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act, which would give all public sector workers the right to collectively bargain and amending the National Labor Relations Act to give workers more power at every stage of the organizing process.

The EPI study found that the highest shares of workers covered by a union contract are public-sector workers (37.8 percent) and private-sector workers in the transportation and utilities (19.4 percent), construction (14.1 percent), information (10.4 percent), manufacturing (9.8 percent), and educational and health services (9.4 percent) industries.

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The Building Tradesman

ISSN-007-3717
is the Official Publication of the Michigan Building and Construction Trades Council
Patrick Devlin
Secretary-Treasurer
Steve Claywell
President



The Building Tradesman is published bi-weekly (every other Friday) by the Michigan Building and Construction Trades Council, Detroit office. 1640 Porter St., Detroit, MI 48216

Printed at Grand Blanc Printing, a union shop

Periodical mail postage paid at Detroit, MI and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER
send postage returns to:
The Building Tradesman
1640 Porter St.
Detroit, MI 48216
Phone: (313) 961-3800
Fax: (313) 961-2467

Union members with address changes are asked to contact their local union.

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Subscription Rate \$15 annually (group rate for unions)
Visit our website:
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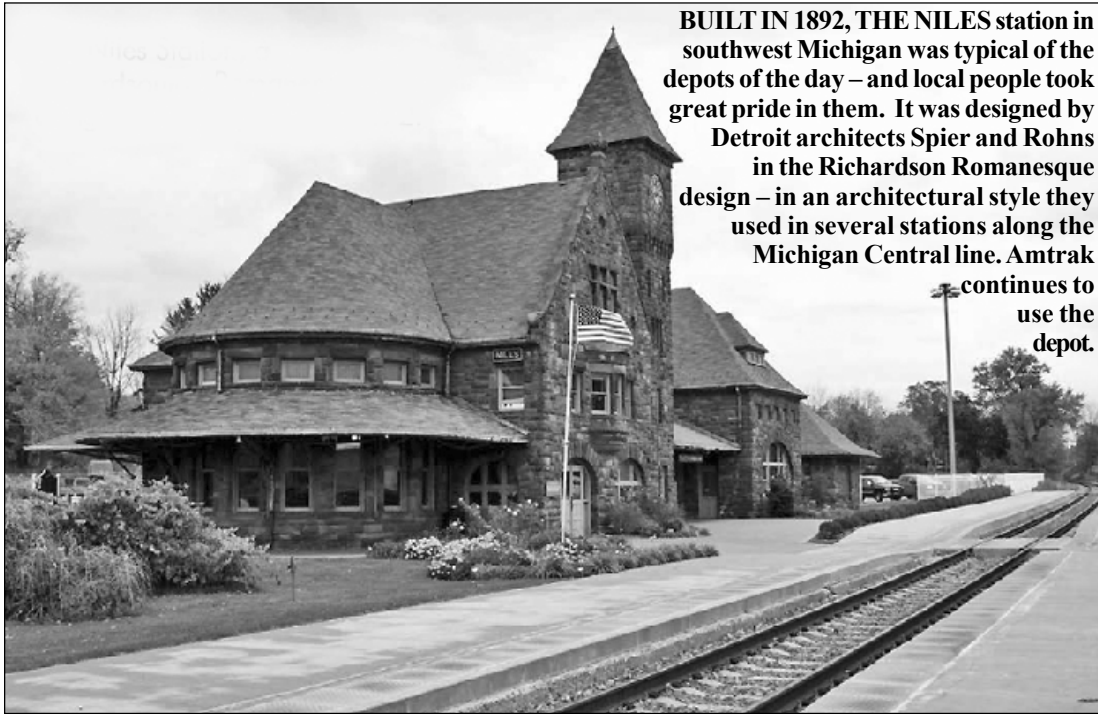
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BUILDING MICHIGAN! The Michigan Central Railroad HISTORY IN THE MAKING

By Marty Mulcahy



BUILT IN 1892, THE NILES station in southwest Michigan was typical of the depots of the day – and local people took great pride in them. It was designed by Detroit architects Spier and Rohns in the Richardson Romanesque design – in an architectural style they used in several stations along the Michigan Central line. Amtrak continues to use the depot.

Photo credit: Michigan Department of Transportation

The introduction of the automobile in Michigan changed everything – not only the way goods and people were moved, but where and when they could go, and the route they would take to get there.

But for decades before automotive giants like Ford and General Motors put Michigan and the rest of the nation on wheels – it's important to remember that we were already on wheels. The steel kind that rolled along a pair of steel tracks, held together by oak log ties and iron spikes. In the 19th Century, railroads in Michigan opened up the nation to towns and cities along the tracks, providing people who had been hemmed in by swamps and dirt roads a reliable, all-weather path to other cities in the United States and Canada.

If there has been a iconic railroad in the state, it would have to be the Michigan Central. It's founders were the first with the vision to cross the Lower Peninsula from Detroit to St. Joseph, with sights on connecting track to the lucrative Chicago market and then the rest of the Midwest. And the operators of the Michigan Central Railroad understood their role in the communities they served, erecting well-designed, and in some cases opulent train depots to serve little villages and medium- and large-sized cities that were often sources of hometown pride.

"Of all the roads serving the Detroit to Chicago market, the Michigan Central was the premier carrier, operating the most trains and serving the largest population centers," writes David Mrozek in *Railroad Depots of Michigan 1910-1920*. "The railroad described its stations as 'buildings of manifest beauty and appropriateness' in an 1890 *Summer Tours* promotional brochure. Who could argue with that claim? The depots at Ann Arbor, Grass Lake, Battle Creek, Kalamazoo and Niles were all buildings of unique and outstanding design."

Work had begun on railroads in Michigan well before the state became a state in January 1837. In 1833 the first railroad tracks in Michigan were laid by the Erie & Kalamazoo Railroad between Adrian and Toledo.

"On March 20, 1837, legislation providing for work to proceed on three railroads and two canals in Michigan became law," says the University of Michigan's Bentley Historical Library. "One of the railroads – the Central – was to connect Detroit and St. Joseph through the second tier of counties. Based upon preliminary work already done by the Detroit and St. Joseph Railroad Company (whose rights and properties were purchased by the state), the railroad was able to begin operation (at least as far as Dearborn) by the end of 1837."

Work had already commenced, beginning in 1836, with rail construction taking place on a line from Detroit, reaching Ypsilanti by February 1838. Rail gangs reached Ann Arbor in October 1839 and Jackson on Dec. 29, 1841.

"Perhaps the most urgent desire for rail travel stemmed from the fact that roads out of Detroit and many areas along the waterway from Toledo to Port Huron were described as 'seas of mud' in nearly every direction, especially in the spring when rivers overflowed their banks," wrote Bill Loomis for *The Detroit News*.

Loomis described the era's early construction method used by entrepreneur Sherman Stevens to lay track for the Detroit-Pontiac railroad. Crews

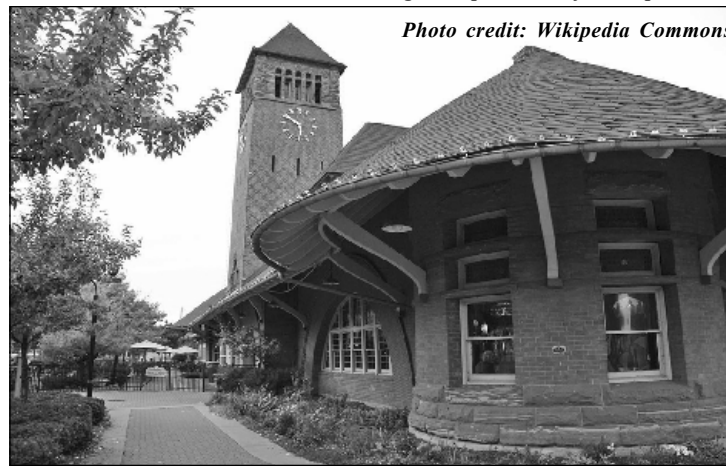


Photo credit: Wikipedia Commons

MICHIGAN CENTRAL Railroad passengers at Battle Creek's station stopped at this beautiful station, built in 1888 also in the Richardson Romanesque style with red Lake Superior sandstone. The building is among many rail depots along the line that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Now a restaurant, Amtrak rail stops in the city are made at a more modern facility nearby.

dug trenches along both sides of the track location to shed water from the rail bed, and then the dirt was used to build up the rail bed itself. Sherman bought timbered land, then built a saw mill to cut the oak rail ties. Large logs, partially squared, were placed on the raised road bed. Atop these logs a notch was made at each end to receive oak "sleeper" rails. The rail was set inside the notches and a wooden wedge was driven along side the iron rail to fasten it in place.

In 1846, the railroad was sold by the state to a group of investors that included John W. Brooks of Massachusetts and Detroit attorney James F. Joy who incorporated the railroad as the Michigan Central Railroad Co.

"By this time," said the Bentley Library, "the central railroad extended as far as Kalamazoo. One of the terms of the sale was that the railroad would reach Lake Michigan within three years. In 1852 the line was extended to Chicago. Over the next half century, the Michigan Central would lease or otherwise gain control of smaller railroad lines serving other parts of the state."

The tiny town of Niles in southwest Michigan just above the Indiana border is a prime example of a community that was fortunate to be along the Michigan Central line – and to get a beautiful rail depot.

"On October 2, 1848, 'an era of prosperity' arrived in Niles when the Michigan Central Railroad (MCRR) became the first railroad to reach the city," says the depot's historic marker. "This Richardsonian Romanesque-style depot was constructed in 1892.... Seeking to create a lasting impression of Michigan for passengers traveling to the 1893 Columbian Exhibition, the company hired the Detroit firm of Spier and Rohns to design the station. Built mostly of Ohio sandstone, this depot replaced a ramshackle structure that the Niles Daily Star referred to as "the old cockroach repository."

Cities big and small along the line welcomed the depots. Detroit's 18-story Michigan Central Station, opened in 1913, was incredibly opulent and was

the tallest depot in the world. Spier and Rohns were the architects for several depots along the line.

"Even before the dawn of the 20th Century, railroad stations were a source of company and community pride," Mrozek wrote. "In cases where a town was served by more than one railroad, companies often tried to 'one-up' the competition across town by building a more elaborate station building. Communities likewise lobbied railroad officials for more attractive stations, since the depot was considered the gateway to their cities. The railroad station was frequently the first building an out-of-town guest would see, and would influence that all-important first impression of the community he or she was entering."

Train stations were often the site where locals met visiting dignitaries, including presidents. Soldiers were honored before going off to war, as were local sports teams, before and after their contests.

The Michigan railroad network reached its peak in 1914, with 9,711 miles of track in service. By the 1920s, cars were becoming king and roads to drive them on were improving. The Michigan Central was absorbed by the New York Central system in 1930, and then in the 1970s, former properties of the MCR were taken up by Conrail and Penn Central.

Much of the former Michigan Central lines are still active, and while some have been demolished, fortunately a number of the historic depots are either still operating under Amtrak or have been re-purposed into restaurants or community centers.

Michael Hodges, who authored *Michigan's Historic Railroad Stations*, told MLive that it was surprising how quickly the prominence of railway stations faded during the Great Depression.

"Train stations just seem to disappear from newspapers around that time," he said. "The train station was no longer regarded as the center of town life. Automobiles and buses surpassed the train as the preferred way to travel, but the local Greyhound station never achieved the status that train stations once held."



A NEW YORK CENTRAL freight train derailed in front of the Ann Arbor train station in 1940, killing one man. A 21-year-old man admitted to putting a spike on the track, causing the derailment. The train station was converted to the Gandy Dancer restaurant in 1970.

Photo credit: Ann Arbor News

Ten building trades unions have endorsed Biden. Here's why.

(Continued from Page 1)

families": union rights, infrastructure, energy, and retirement security and benefits.

After extensive discussion and consideration," McManus said, "the UA PEC and general officers have made the decision to endorse Vice President Joe Biden for President in 2020."

Here's why Biden, according to the UA, which we have condensed for space.

Union Rights. When it comes to protecting the fundamental abilities of unions to organize and fight for fair wages and benefits, the contrast could not be starker. Vice President Biden has committed to signing the Protecting the Right to Organize Act (PRO Act), which would make it easier for the UA and other unions to organize new contractors, strengthen the rights of workers, and enhance the National Labor Relations Board's power to punish employers who violate labor laws.

Biden will also impose a national ban on state so-called right-to-work laws, which weaken our ability to fight for fair wages and benefits. President Trump has refused to sign the PRO Act and is in favor of right-to-work laws. Both of those positions would do irreparable harm to UA families.

President Trump's Labor Department has led the fight against union apprenticeships by instituting Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Programs, or IRAPs. These programs essentially allow employers to skirt our high standards for apprenticeships – meaning they can hire nonunion labor on the cheap.

Vice President Biden will defend registered union apprenticeships from IRAPs, helping us maintain our status as the gold standard of the construction industry.

If elected President, Vice President Biden will protect our ability to organize and win more work with fair wages and benefits. Perhaps more importantly: Biden would appoint pro-labor judges to the federal bench to defend against anti-labor attacks, as well as appointing as pro-worker Secretary of Labor.

On infrastructure. The bottom line on infrastructure is simple: do the candidates keep their promises? President Trump promised a trillion-dollar infrastructure package that would put UA members to work. Almost four years later and he has never brought that plan up for a vote. In fact, his only proposal has been to cut federal funding for roads and bridges while also privatizing construction projects. That's unacceptable.

Just joking

A farmer had five female pigs. Times were hard, so he decided to take them to the county fair and sell them.

At the fair, he met another farmer who owned five male pigs. After talking a bit, they decided to mate the pigs and if they had babies, split everything 50/50.

The farmers lived 60 miles apart. So they agreed to drive 30 miles each, and find a field in which to let the pigs mate.

The first morning, the farmer with the female pigs got up at 5 a.m., loaded the them all into his pickup, and drove the 30 miles. While the pigs were mating, he asked the other farmer, "How will I know if they're pregnant?"

The other farmer replied, "If they're lying in the grass tomorrow morning, they're pregnant. If they're in the mud, they're not."

The next morning the pigs were rolling in the mud. So he hosed them off, loaded them into the pickup and proceeded to try again. This continued each morning for more than a week. Both farmers became worn out.

The next morning the farmer was too tired to get out of bed. He called to his wife, "honey, please look outside and tell me whether the pigs are in the mud or in the grass."

"Neither," yelled his wife. "They're in the pickup and one of them is in the cab..." "BEEPI!"

"Now, one is honking the horn!"

Biden is proposing a \$1.3 trillion infrastructure plan that will, among other things, double federal investments in clean drinking water and water infrastructure – especially in communities at high risk of lead or other contamination. Biden has a history of delivering on his promises on infrastructure, too. In 2009, he led the execution of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that saved our country from the brink of depression. Biden's infrastructure plans will ensure that prevailing wage and project labor agreements (PLAs) are used on all projects and strictly enforced.

On Energy. Truth be told, the Trump Administration has done some good things for us.

However, while President Trump has relaxed some regulatory standards and allowed pipeline projects to proceed, his Administration has been haphazard in their approach. As a result, it has actually resulted in more litigation and lengthy delays that mean instability for our members.

Biden has committed to securing federal investments in nuclear energy and an all-of-the-above energy approach, even in the face of staunch opposition from environmental activists. Biden also supports concentrated solar power and hydro-power and has committed to making strong investments in those technologies. In addition, a Biden Administration will work with us on common sense reforms to the permitting and regulatory processes that govern energy projects and avoid frivolous lawsuits that keep our members from working.

And let's set the record straight here, no matter what you might have heard: Vice President Biden has publicly declared there will not be a ban on fracking.

The reality here is that both candidates are not perfect on energy, but Biden has shown a genuine pledge to ensuring new investments in nuclear and a modernization of the permitting and regulatory processes that have held up our projects for years – which is enough to earn our support on energy.

On retirement security and benefits. It's no secret that many union pension plans are in danger of insolvency. Sadly, the Trump Administration has done nothing to fix multiemployer plans and protect the hard-earned retirement of UA members. Instead of addressing this looming crisis, the Trump Administration chose to put other retirement assets at risk by un-

dering a Labor Department rule implemented during the Obama-Biden Administration that protected the retirement investments of union members by requiring financial advisers to put their clients' interests ahead of their own. Trump effectively let Wall Street benefit on the backs of working families.

Biden has also committed to forming a working group with labor leaders to address such issues as the current health of multiemployer pension plans. We need an immediate fix, and under a Biden Administration we will take concrete steps towards protecting our retirement security.

A steady hand. We're at a critical point in our nation's history: from defeating COVID-19, to rebuilding our economy and infrastructure, the next president will not have an easy job. With Vice President Biden, we know we'll have a steady hand in the Oval Office to help us come out of this pandemic stronger than before.

When Biden was a young senator, he didn't just stand with the UA in Washington – he stood with us on the line. Biden joined striking members on the jobsite in Delaware and helped stop management from breaking up the project, even when they called in the state troopers. Compare that with Trump, who actively fights against unions on his own projects and even refuses to pay contractors for work they already completed. We know who's really on our side.

Let's be real: Joe Biden is not a perfect candidate. Nobody will be with us on every single issue. But Biden will protect our ability to fight for fair wages and benefits, while helping us win more work. He'll help us streamline and modernize permitting processes and invest in energy like nuclear, and he'll make sure our long-overdue pension relief gets done. He'll protect organized labor at its core and our ability to negotiate fair contracts with prevailing wage. We know we'll have an ally not only in the White House, but on Federal Regulatory Energy Commission and Pipelines and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, too.

If we don't step up to lead, the UA is going to get left behind. We can't let that happen. That's why the UA PEC undertook this extensive process to evaluate the candidates on the issues that matter to us – and that's why we're outlining, for you, the candidates' stances and what led to our decision to endorse Joe Biden for President.

Michigan construction succumbing to COVID

(Continued from Page 1)

Simonson, the association's chief economist. "Meanwhile, budget problems in state and local governments, most of which started a new fiscal year in July, led to cancellation or postponement of many infrastructure and public facilities projects."

The AGC reported that construction employment decreased from June to July in 26 states, "as earlier widespread job gains gave way to more project cancellations." The AGC analysis said construction employment "is likely to continue falling in many parts of the country without new federal recovery measures, including liability reform and new infrastructure funding."

Michigan was among the top half of states that saw monthly construction employment increase in July – our state saw an employment increase of 2,600 jobs, a 1.5 percent jump that ranked us No. 9 among the states. Unfortunately, the vast majority of percentage gains among the states for the month was in that scant 1 percent range. More broadly, over the course of the previous 12 months, Michigan lost 2,400 construction jobs, or 1.4 percent of its entire workforce, ranking our state No. 20.

From July 2019 to July 2020, construction employment declined in 39 states, increased in 10 and held steady in two. California lost the most construction jobs over the year (-55,800 jobs, -6.3 percent), followed by Texas (-39,200 jobs, -5.0 percent).

South Dakota had the largest percentage increase of construction jobs during those 12 months (+10.5 percent, 2,500 jobs), followed by Utah (+7.8 percent, 8,600 jobs).

"Without new federal support, the industry's recovery will be short-lived, risking new industry layoffs and declining investments in equipment and materials," said Stephen E. Sandherr, the AGC's chief executive officer. "Rebuilding infrastructure, protecting businesses that are complying with coronavirus safety protocols and stimulating private-sector demand will help sustain the industry's recovery, protect good-paying jobs and support the economy."

Meanwhile, the news wasn't much better when it comes to construction starts. Dodge Data and Analytics reported on Aug. 17 that total U.S. construction starts fell 7 percent in July to an adjusted rate of \$631.6 billion.

Richard Branch, chief economist for Dodge, offered a shot of hope along with a dose of reality, given the ongoing grip of rise of COVID cases in many areas. "The July decline in construction starts should not be interpreted as a setback on the sector's road to recovery," Branch said. "The gains in the nonresidential and residential sectors mirror the general overall improvements in the economy. The drop in public works could represent a settling back in activity following a solid spring in which some projects broke ground earlier than expected to take advantage of the fewer cars on the road during the COVID-19 shutdown in March and April."

"While the recovery progresses, the Congressional impasse preventing the extension of enhanced unemployment insurance benefits and small business loans included in earlier fiscal support packages casts a pallor over the future trajectory for growth. While one month doesn't constitute a trend, the potential risk to construction from the rising number of COVID cases in these regions is significant."



Local 1191 Laborers

Laborers 1191

DETROIT – Due to COVID-19, Laborers' Local 1191 is making every effort to keep our members and staff safe during this time by limiting person-to-person contact at the Local Union Hall.

The Office is now Open. Thanking you in advance for complying with the above conditions and please follow the COVID-19 recommendations to stay safe and healthy.

Members can now pay dues online 24/7 on our website! Upper right-hand corner Pay Dues tab, and follow the instructions...

Check out our website at www.laborerslocal1191.org Important information about your Local Union ... Also, on Facebook!!!

Dues: Beginning Jan. 1, 2020 regular monthly dues are \$35.00 for active members. Retiree monthly dues will remain the same \$8.00.

NOTICE: The Uniform Local Union Constitution Article VIII sec. 4. The monthly dues are due on the first day of the month and unless paid on or before the last day of the following month, the member shall be deemed suspended by the International Union without notice.

We urge members to make their payments timely to avoid additional costs!

Retirees: Retiree Councils' meetings are the last Friday of the month. The meetings are held 11:00 a.m. at the Local Union Hall located at 2161 West Grand Boulevard in Detroit.

MUST Safety Awareness Training: Please check the MUST website at www.mustonline.org to see how many modules you have. **Members are reminded to get your 18 modules and keep them up to date also a current Drug Test.** You can schedule an appointment to take your modules at our training school by calling (734) 729-7005 or 517-625-4919 website www.mltai.org. You can also contact the Local 313-894-2241.

Also, check out the training classes available to you at no cost.

Note: classes & certifications contractors have been asking for are, OSHA 30, Asbestos & Lead Awareness, Hoisting & Rigging, Pipeline Safety, Class A Cdl License, Asbestos Removal Supervisors Licence, Confined Space Permit Required, Grade Checking Blueprint Reading & Measuring Tools, Gps Location. All are available at the training center. It could mean the difference of being sent to work or not!

FYI: By taking the OSHA 30 your 18 MUST Safety modules are updated as well. If you are not able to go to the Training Center for MUST Safety Modules contact the Local, we will help make arrangements for you to complete them.

Referral List: Every member who is looking for work must call, or come to the Local Union Office on Mondays between 1:00 pm and 4:00 pm and put their name on the out-of-work list. You must have an out-of-work skills sheet filled out and on file in order to be referred out for work by this Local Union. (Be sure to Check & Update your Skills.)

Also please be advised: Per the out of work list rules, all members on the list must re-register your availability for work every quarter and do so within the first five days of the following months: **March, June, September and December (Roll Call).**

Your failure to do so will result in your name being removed from the referral list. *Example: If your name is on the list in April and you don't re-register by June 5 your name will be removed from the list.

Members are urged to report new project starts to the Local Union. Members working for a contractor who may be looking to hire additional laborers are urged to call the Union Hall and help a brother or sister get referred out to work. The next time, it may be your name on the list when that call comes in for work.

Save Time & Money: no more checks or money orders to mail no more worry if it gets here on time, **monthly dues can be deducted from your vacation check and sent direct to the Local.** Please stop by the office to get one of the forms or you may call (Continued next column)



Local 149 Roofers & Waterproofer

Roofers 149

DETROIT – Main Office – Southeastern Lower Michigan – Regular Membership Meeting. The next regular membership meeting is scheduled for Tues., Oct. 6, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. The next Executive Board meeting is scheduled for Tues., Sep. 29, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

Condolences. It is with great sadness and heavy hearts that we inform you of the passing of the following Brother. Brother Tadeusz E. Kowcun, he was 75 years old and a 33-year member. Brother Kowcun passed on 8/24/2020.

Scholarship. This year the Joint Scholarship Committee is proud to announce the offering of four scholarship grants, for those planning a post high school higher education.

Those individuals interested in obtaining a scholarship grant, will submit an essay to the Joint Scholarship Committee. The essay should contain 250 words or more. You may select one or more of the following topics:

- Roofing Technology – Old vs. New
- Roofing Safety – Safety practices and their importance
- Roofing Impact – What does roofing mean to you, based on your life experiences?
- Roofing Ethics – Is my parent and/or guardian in a job that matters to society?

The scholarship applications are available at the Union Hall. The scholarship is worth \$1,000.00. All essays must be received no later than September 18, 2020.

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 Thomas Jaranowski at the Training Center, 248-543-3847, or TJaranowski@DetroitRoofers.org to make arrangements.

Reminder. Members please call the Hall when you see a roofing project whether it is one of our signatory companies or not. The Hall needs this information. Members are reminded to call the Hall (313) 961-6093 to put their name on the out of work list.

Follow us on Facebook for announcement updates @ United Union of Roofers, Waterproofer, and Allied Workers Local 149

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.

MID-MICHIGAN AREA – Clio Office. The next Mid-Michigan regular membership meeting is scheduled for Tue, Oct 13, 2020 at 6 p.m. at 810 Tacoma Ct. Clio MI, 48420.

Mid-Michigan Training Center Information. Journeyworkers upgrade classes to improve your skills, your worth, and our Brotherhood/Sisterhood are 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 Training Center, 810-687-1368, or rickbaird81@gmail.com to make arrangements.

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.

Local 1191, con't the office (313-894-2241) to have one mailed to you.

Members who sign up for Vacation deduction and pay 6 months at a time will receive a 1-month rebate!!! Also, be sure to keep your current address and phone numbers up to date with Local. Current E-mail address is also very important! Also, we are now accepting CREDIT & DEBIT payments.

"A week is a long time in politics."
—Harold Wilson (1916 - 1995)



Heat and Frost Insulators Local 25

Heat & Frost Insulators Local 25 SOUTHFIELD -REMINDER: We continue to be under the directive of the International Union and pursuant to that directive, the SEPTEMBER 2020 UNION MEETING has been cancelled. Continue to monitor the Facebook page for updates.

WEBSITE: The new website is up and running. It can be located at: <https://heatfrostinsulators.org>.



CURT
McGLONE

APPAREL New Local 25 apparel is available at the Union Hall. New items include: knit hats and beanies, new hi-vis short and long sleeved t-shirts and hi-vis hoodies. Apparel can be viewed on the Facebook page.

EMPLOYMENT CHANGES: All employment changes; hire, lay off, fire, shop change, disability, etc. must be called into the Union Hall. The only way to guarantee you are on the out of work list and your employment records remains current and correct is to call the Office – (248) 352-1850.

LAY OFF/HIRE: Please be reminded, all members shall notify the Business Manager within forty-eight hours after accepting a job or upon termination of employment. Failure to report will result in an automatic fifty dollar fine.

S.U.B. FUND: Please be reminded, in order to receive a S.U.B. Fund check on Friday, all paperwork must be submitted to the Office no later than 2:00 p.m. on Thursday.

SUB FUND TIME LIMITATION: Please be reminded, per the Plan Document: Each time a participant receives a State Unemployment check, he/she must mail or deliver the receipt, check stub, or a copy of the check to the Administrator's office within thirty (30) days of receipt of said State Unemployment check. Any request for a benefit payment past the thirty (30) days will be denied per the Plan Document.

BENESYS: When calling the Fund Office, Benesys, please be sure to get the name of the person providing you information. Lately, we have been experiencing some incorrect information being provided to our members. In order to make sure the correct information is provided, it helps to have a name so the Union Office can call Benesys, correct the person providing incorrect information and find out why they are providing our members with incorrect information.

SICK AND INJURED: Please keep all our sick and injured members in your thoughts and prayers.

"Man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love."

—Martin Luther King Jr. (1929 - 1968)



Abatement Workers Local 207

Abatement Workers Local 207 TAYLOR – Calls for workers are beginning to come in at a better pace as we approach the busy time of the year. When you do return to work, follow all required Covid guidelines that may be in place for certain sites. Remember to call in if you are unemployed for help with future placement.



KEVIN
MEAGHER

Updated, working telephone numbers are necessary to help you with work placement. Do not get caught without the necessary current job site credentials, although several state agencies have relaxed renewal requirements due to the pandemic.

The General Office still has a ban on Union Meeting and Elections. Our current election process is still on hold until an ok is given to proceed. All members will be notified by mail when the election can resume.

Retirement of Long-Standing Business Manager: After 29 years as an officer with Local 207 Dan Somenauer has announced that it is time for him to retire. All of us at local 207 want to thank Dan for his strong leadership and professionalism for taking our Union from its infant beginnings to the strong, respected and powerful Union that we are. Without his guidance we would surely not have the strong pay and benefit programs that we have now! Dan, Thank you again. You are Local 207.

Dan will be finishing his time with us through the end of September during the transition for the new officers, so please feel free to give a call to thank him for all he has done for each and every one of us. Brother, enjoy your retirement you have whole-heartedly earned it. You will be missed.

From the departing Business Manager, Dan Somenauer: Thanks to the membership for your cooperation and hard work during my 29 years of service with Local 207. It has been a pleasure to serve you throughout these years. Local 207's success has only occurred with the joint effort between the administration and the membership. I look forward to my retirement and I leave in good hands with Doug Ripple & Kevin Meagher. I believe they will continue the progressive path for Local 207 in the future. Best to you all and again, Thank You.

UPCOMING ASBESTOS TRAINING CLASSES: Asbestos Supervisor Refresher > Saturday, October 3rd, 2020.

Check with the Office to ensure the classes will occur as scheduled.

•All classes will be held at Local 207's office @ 26453 Northline in Taylor.

•Classes begin promptly at 8AM and end at 4PM, followed by a Lead Awareness Update.

If you are due to expire and need one of these refreshers now, please call the Taylor Office (1-800-207-5622) to register.

•Class sizes are being limited due to state guidelines currently in place.

BE SAFE, WEAR YOUR MASKS, & FOLLOW THE SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES!



Local 47 Heat and Frost Insulators

Heat and Frost Insulators & Allied Workers Local 47

LANSING – The Union Meeting originally scheduled for September 11, 2020 has been cancelled due to the current Covid-19 pandemic.

To combat and limit the spread of Covid-19, Local 47 encourages all members to continue to work safe, and if you feel sick contact a doctor immediately.

Any retirees wanting to go to work, please call the office. The Funds Trustees have waived the 79-hour rule.

The International Union is requesting all the names of past and present members that are Veterans of the Armed Forces. This list will be going back to our charter in 1937. We need the name, registration number, military branch and dates served. Please call the office for more information.

All members should have received a letter from our International regarding the Asbestos Exposure Scientific Study. For more information on how to participate in this study, please contact Business Manager Patrick Welch at the main Local 47 Office number: 517-708-0665

Per the Rules and Procedures:

Members must notify the office within 24 hours of being laid off or charges may be placed.

Members must notify the office before ANY overtime is worked. Contracts are available at the Union Office or at the Union Meeting upon request.

OSHA 10: Local 47 will be offering OSHA 10 to any Active Member who is not current with the program. The course is done online, so if you wish to take the course please contact the Local Union office with your email address and we will be more than happy to set it up for you. If you do not have a computer at home, you are welcome to come to the Local Union Office to take the course.

To ensure all Active Members and Retirees are receiving their Robo calls please make sure you have not blocked the following number: (804) 441-8365. There are several members who have the number blocked and therefore are not receiving the Robo Calls. These calls are only used for Important Notifications from the Local Union Business Manager and Funeral Notifications. If you are not receiving these calls, please contact the Local Union Office and we will double check to make sure we have the correct number in the system or if you may have blocked the number.

Local 47 has been receiving a lot of returned mail from our members. We ask that if you have a change of address or phone number to please call the Local Union Office right away so we can update your information throughout our system, TIC's, and the with the International. It is very important to make sure your contact information is always update with Local 47.

Anyone interested in joining the newly formed Breath Of Life Committee is asked to please call the Local Union Office.

Pension and Health Welfare: Larry Tolbert (269-345-8944)

Allied Workers' Local 47 Fringe Benefit Funds
6525 Centurion Drive, Lansing, MI 48917-9275

Toll Free Number: (800) 323-8079
Telephone Number: (517) 321-7502
Fax Number: (517) 321-7508

Larry Tolbert will be available via phone to answer any questions regarding Pension, Welfare and Vacation Funds. Larry is the Secretary for the Pension, Welfare, Vacation and Special Benefits and can be reached by phone at (269) 345-8944, or by mail at: P.O. Box 19541, Kalamazoo, MI 49019.

To all active members, if you have not sent in your Coordination of Benefits Form, your Spousal Form, or your Birth Certificates for your Children, no one will be covered on our insurance until these items are sent to TIC. Please call TIC immediately at (800) 323-8079 and get the above-mentioned forms into the fund ASAP and you will be reinstated retroactively

Remember that Auto and Motorcycle accidents are not covered by our plan. Auto and Motorcycle accidents should be covered by your personal Auto Insurance policy.

Members having questions regarding Pension and Welfare Fund please contact TIC International at the numbers below or log onto their Website: www.heatfrostlocal47benefits.org

Please complete and return the working spousal forms to TIC. JATC Coordinator Phil Wilson (616-466-8736)

Applications are open for the Apprenticeship Program. Call the Union Office.

Under Duties of Apprenticeship, Section 5.3 part L, page 4 of the Apprenticeship Standards states, "According to the Apprenticeship Standards you are required to accurately fill out the online work report for NO later than ten (10) days from the end of the current work week."

Good and Welfare: Get well to all our sick and injured members

"The human tendency to regard little things as important has produced very many great things."

—Georg Christoph Lichtenberg (1742 - 1799)

"However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results."

—Sir Winston Churchill (1874 - 1965)

"I've always followed my father's advice: he told me, first to always keep my word and, second, to never insult anybody unintentionally. If I insult you, you can be goddamn sure I intend to. And, third, he told me not to go around looking for trouble."

—John Wayne (1907 - 1979)

"Saying goodbye doesn't mean anything. It's the time we spent together that matters, not how we left it."

—Trey Parker and Matt Stone

"It is better to wear out than to rust out."

—Bishop Richard Cumberland



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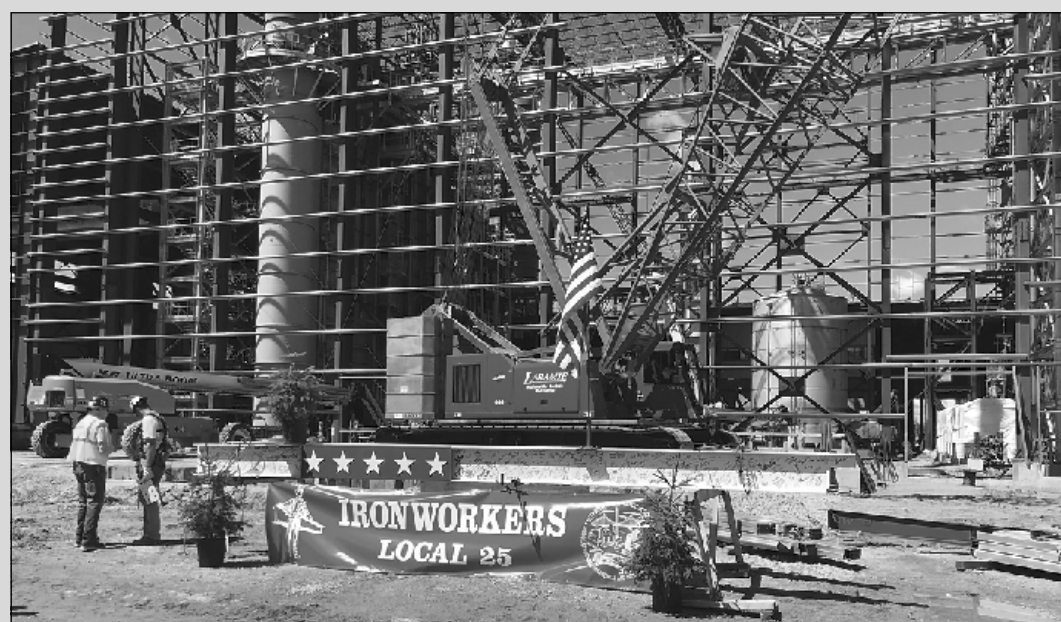
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THE FINAL STEEL beam used in the topping out at the Lansing Board of Water and Light's Delta Energy Park had five stars to honor five contractors associated with the project who were killed in a plane crash last year. Photo credit: Lansing BWL

The iron is up at Delta Energy Park

(Continued from Page 1)

six occupants of the plane died in an Oct. 3 plane crash in a field west of Lansing's Capital Region International Airport. The six-passenger Socata TBM 700 airplane took off from Indy South Greenwood Airport at 8 a.m. and crashed about an hour later.

The National Transportation Safety Board and the Federal Aviation Administration have yet to release a determination of the cause of the crash. A report in the *Daily Journal* said inves-

tigators estimated the plane to be overweight before the flight and when it crash-landed, accounting for fuel usage.

The overall \$500 million Delta Energy project by the BWL involves the installation of three natural gas-fired combustion turbines, each rated at 55 megawatts. The new plant will put the BWL on target to lower its greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent, and allow it to retire its aging Eckert and Erickson coal-fired plants.

Josh Redinger, vice president of Redinger Steel, said his

company has been on the project since mid-February, peaking out at about 15 iron workers. He connected the final beam along with fellow iron worker Nick Place. Operating the cranes were Local 324's Nick Peterson and Doug Paris.

"Aside from dealing with COVID-19, it's been a really nice project," Redinger said. "The iron workers have done really well, and the Lansing Power Constructors set everything up for us; I've been impressed with how well it has been structured."

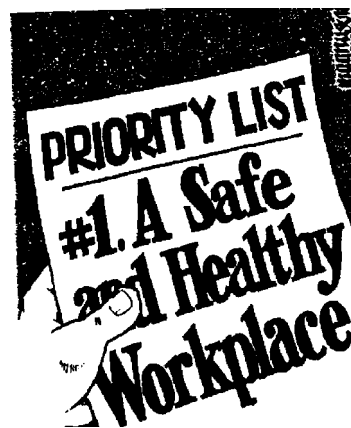


Local 8 Iron Workers

Iron Workers Local Union #8
Tim Roman, Business Representative

UPPER PENINSULA - WELD CERTIFICATIONS: Weld certifications are being held on a as needed basis. Please contact Rich Hanson at the Apprenticeship office for more information. 414-476-9372.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING: The Membership Meeting will take place by video conference on September 23rd, 2020, at 5:00 p.m. CST. Members can gain access to the meeting at <https://meeting.iwl8.org> on the afternoon of the meeting.



Local 25 Iron Workers

Iron Workers 25

NOVI - Labor Day is Monday September 7, 2020, all halls are closed.

Work is Available! We are in need of manpower. If you or someone you know is off, please call Dispatch or a Business Agent. We must fill our jobs in order to protect them!

Dispatch is OPEN. Please call 248-305-9282: Monday through Friday 7 am to 10 am. If you happen to get voicemail, just leave your name, book number and phone number. Local 25 Active Members, Apprentices and Probationary should call each day you are out of work. **OR use our website to sign up for the out of work list: www.ironworkers25.org**

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 newborn child, or a new dependent child through marriage **MUST NOTIFY the Fringe Benefit Office of your new dependent within 31 days.**

The next Zoom Union Meeting will be Monday, September 28, 2020 at 7:00 pm. Please sign up as Notifications will go out via the APP. Participation was very good in August and we look forward to more members joining us in September. 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.ironworkers25.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!

Unfortunately Steward Meetings are still cancelled until further notice as we adhere to the Governor's revised Executive Orders.

Stewards' Notes: 1) The Electronic Steward Reporting forms are online www.ironworkers25.org Log in with your book number, and the password is the last 4 (four) of your social. **2) 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**

3) 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.

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.**

Classes at the Local 25 Apprenticeship School have started up again, please go to the ironworkers25.org to view the block schedule; we are practicing social distancing protocols, etc. **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.

Welder online Verification: For an accurate and quick review of welder certifications please visit www.weldercertification.org On the homepage click "login" and type "read only" as both your username and password. Once logged on, type the member's book number in the column on the left marked "advanced search," click the "go" button, wait until the name pops up, and then click on the welders first or last name.

On the next screen, click "list certifications." Every welding certification the welder has will be available for viewing and you can see that if it has been renewed; it is good until the year 2021. The site also allows you to print out a copy of the welder WPQR if needed.

Click on "list test results." Click on the actual test code you want to see and you will see the test details. On that page click "Printable Form" (WPQR) and you can print the WPQR. If you read this please contact the Training Center for meeting credit.

The following Events are Cancelled: Detroit Labor Day Parade, and the Labor Day Bridge Walk in Mackinaw. The Annual September Ironworker Benefit Dinner is cancelled. If anyone wishes to make a donation to the ICIF please contact Jimmy Horvath at the Novi Union Hall. Thank you.

Pay union dues with credit-debit card 24/7 by calling 888-386-8173 and follow the prompts. OR PAY at www.ironworkers25.org *Any member payment for multiple members, fines, suspensions, withdrawal deposits, SHOULD NOT use this process. Whenever possible we are emailing you, your dues receipt.*

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.

Pay a year's dues or more (\$429.00 Journeyman) (\$426.00 Apprentice) and you will get a (1) one-month dues paid for by Local 25. (Get the 13th month free). This is intended to encourage members to pay their dues in a timely manner. The one month will be credited in the month **AFTER** your actual 12-month payment.

Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson stated that all REGISTERED voters in Michigan will receive an application to vote by mail in the November elections. By mailing applications, the Secretary of State will ensure that no "Michigander has to choose between their health and their right to vote," said Benson. "Voting by mail is easy, convenient, safe, and secure, and every voter in Michigan has the right to do it."

The application is also available for download at Michigan.gov/Vote. At the same website, voters can also register and join the permanent absent voter list so they always have the option to vote by mail. Check your voter registration at Michigan Voter Information Center Michigan.gov/Vote

Voter Registration - Alternately ironworkers can visit ironworkersvote.org to check their voter registration status, register to vote, and request a mail ballot. This is a service from the national Building Trades and works in every state, so our Members can use it and share it with their Family Members also!

"If you do not take an interest in the affairs of your government, then you are doomed to live under the rule of fools." -Plato

The International Association (IABSORIW) has endorsed Joe Biden for president of the United States of America.

Curtis Schmidt would appreciate thoughts and prayers for **Patrick Allen #1007390** as he battles lung cancer. Best wishes to Patrick from all the Officers here at Local 25.

ATTENTION RETIREES: The Novi Retirees regular meeting is "in person" September 15, 2020 at 10:00am. Social distancing, face masks and good hygiene will be observed. There will be no luncheons in the near future, coffee and cake will be provided however. The Novi Retirees Board of Directors meets "in person" September 1, 2020.

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.

The Retirees' Scholarship Fund Golf Outing is September 10, 2020 at Green Hills Golf Course in Pinconning. Golf is \$60.00 per person with cart, payable the day of the event. For registration info call Dallas Compeau 989-737-5518.

The Bay City Retirees are

planning a regular meeting for October 15, 2020.

Diversified Members Credit Union: Located at 25880 Novi Rd. Phone: 248-344-2560 - CALL FOR HOURS. Services available: debit or credit cards, interest bearing checking accounts, IRAs, CDs, Benefits Plus program, **HOME MORTGAGES**, low interest loans and part of Co-Op Shared Branching. We have other branch locations in Detroit and Clawson.

Home Mortgages for Union Families: Learn more about the unique benefits available to union members, their parents and children. **CALL 866-802-7307, M-F 8am - 10pm EST, Sat 9am - 5:30pm EST www.unionplus.org**

Those who have passed: Robert Chiles passed away August 18, 2020 at the age of 52; he was an Apprentice ironworker from October 1988 through July 1992. He is survived by his brother Thomas "Bubba" Chiles #1112200. Fred Lapan #1070494 passed away August 12, 2020 at the age of 65. He was a 13-year member prior to his withdrawal in 1994. Gregory Burnett #1237827 was a 23-year member who passed away August 20, 2020 at the age of 67. Carl Weigle #817293 passed away August 30, 2020 at the age of 74. He was a 51-year member. He is survived by his son Eric Weigle #1197163.

Our deep condolences to all of the family and friends as you mourn the loss of your dear loved one(s)!

To all Union Members: We hope you and your family are safe and healthy. Thank you for all you continue to do to support each other during this pandemic response.

This information is as of Submission Time for this Article (8/31/2020 12:00 pm E.S.T.).

"Slight not what's near, while aiming at what's far."
-Euripides (484 BC - 406 BC),



Local 36 Elevator Constructors

Elevator Constructors 36

DETROIT - ALL MEMBERS ARE INFORMED that our next regular Membership Meeting was planned for Monday, Sept. 28th, 2020 at 5:30 pm, as of this printing we are having a meeting in the parking lot only, we are seeking alternate ways to communicate if the weather does not cooperate or if a venue opens to accommodate us. Any changes in this schedule or venue will be included in future Building Tradesmen articles and emails. The Local requests your email so we may inform you on any last-minute changes or the possibility of virtual meetings.

All Members, 4th quarter dues are due by October 1, 2020. Please remember that there are two International Death Assessments being collected for Bill Rogers, Local 2; and Joseph Crook, Local 63. Please include a extra \$10 to your total for these assessments.

Attention, our NEBA contract will be expiring July 9th of 2022 so we will be having nominations for the Delegates for the 32nd General Convention. At our December 28th meeting, per the International Constitution and By-laws. Any Resolutions for the next contract shall be turned into the Hall as per our Local Constitution and By-laws before our February 22nd 2021 meeting.

Attention All Apprentices, classes are available as of August 31, 2020 on the NEIEP website. Check your NEIEP email address for additional information. NEIEP will be continuing the next semester with the format of online classes. Apprentices who have completed their classes will soon receive their invite for the Mechanic's Exam and have been sent an e-mail from the Local regarding the Mechanic review courses, if not call the hall. **Monthly OJT Forms** are still required of **ALL APPRENTICES!** You can drop these forms at the hall. **This is a requirement of the Department of Labor.** Do not put your apprenticeship in jeopardy by failing to fulfill your responsibility. This will also result in your appearance before the Local JAC Committee.

Attention All Apprentices, upgrade letters have been sent to all employers. This becomes effective the first full pay cycle after September 1, 2020. Check and verify that you have received your raise at this time.

Attention All Members: Check your pay stubs regularly. There have been issues with multiple Employers with proper payments. The hours you are paid should match hours toward vacation, benefits and expenses submitted. All may request a copy of the time you submit, according to Article XI, Par 2. of our CBA. Any changes are to your time are to be documented and given to you, Article XI, Par 1. We recommend all request a copy as issue with payrolls seem to be rising. Document all tests that are due and only tasks you have completed.

All Members, Local 36 is working with Local 85, Lansing and the EIWPFF holding classes on Monday nights, 6:00 - 8:00 pm. Reviewing and answering any questions pertaining to Michigan and Detroit Elevator Codes. Contact the Hall if you are interested. The link will be sent to you for either online or phone participation.

The City of Detroit is open by appointment only for license renewal. Be advised they would like it done online. Send emails to kurtj@detroitmi.gov with photos of current driver license and current city of Detroit Elevator license and your phone number attached or call 313-316-8711. Kurt Johnson has said all licenses expiration dates have been extended during the shutdown. These instructions have been sent to you through email. City of Detroit Elevator Journey Person testing procedures have been updated, an email containing this information will be sent to all. Please keep all licenses current.

All members are reminded that your company is responsible to deliver material to the jobsite. Use of personal vehicles for delivery of material is for only emergency situations. There are no emergencies in modernization or construction. All construction, modernization and cab work is **TEAMWORK**. This is according to our agreement and follows your company's safety policy. A licensed journey person must also be onsite while any work is performed. If you are asked or told differently call the hall **immediately**. Also, all jobs are to be reported to the **HALL**, this does include all unloads, crane picks and cab modernizations. This is our work and **SHALL** be performed by **ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS!**

We regret to inform all members of the Passing of Honorary Retirees William "Billy" Kantz on August 18, 2020 and Geoff Hughes on August 28, 2020. On behalf of the Local we wish to extend our condolences to their families and friends.

Get well wishes are extended to all our Brothers and Sisters who are on our sick list. Keep safe and healthy. Be a Brother to a Brother, regardless of what Local they might belong too. Be Safe and Be Healthy!

"The world is moving so fast these days that the man who says it can't be done is generally interrupted by someone doing it."
-Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878 - 1969)

"The nice part about being a pessimist is that you are constantly being either proven right or pleasantly surprised."
-George F. Will (1941 -)

"It does not seem to be true that work necessarily needs to be unpleasant. It may always have to be hard, or at least harder than doing nothing at all. But there is ample evidence that work can be enjoyable, and that indeed, it is often the most enjoyable part of life."
-Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi,

"If you have a talent, use it in every which way possible. Don't hoard it. Don't dole it out like a miser. Spend it lavishly like a millionaire intent on going broke."
-Brendan Francis

"My definition of a free society is a society where it is safe to be unpopular."
-Adlai E. Stevenson Jr. (1900 - 1965)

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Dems' plan 'is the most pro-union platform I've seen in my 50 years'

(Continued from Page 1)

tie between Biden and GOP President Donald Trump in a constituency, blue-collar white men, whom Trump heavily carried four years ago. And, Trumka said, Biden learned from Clinton's mistakes of taking both union voters and certain states, notably the Great Lakes industrial states of Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio and Pennsylvania, for granted. She skipped campaigning in at least the first two.

All four states narrowly went for Trump. Union voters remembered former Democratic President Bill Clinton, her husband, pushing through the jobs-losing "free trade" pact, NAFTA. They also witnessed Hillary Clinton's campaign flipflop on the Trans-Pacific Partnership. They deserted her in droves. In those four states, Trump won half of union family votes, narrowly won all of them overall, and the presidency.

One reason those voters deserted, Trumka said, is they justifiably believed the powers-that-be, in both politics and corporate suites and in both parties, had left them behind. That's persisted, but Biden is addressing it, unlike Hillary Clinton, he added.

"Right now, there's inequality of wealth and wages. There's inequality of opportunity. And there's inequality of power. But you can't address the first two without addressing the inequality of power," first, Trumka explained. "Joe understands that" and understands the way to achieve it is "workers have to have a stronger voice on the job, and that there is a need to grow the economy from the bottom up and the center out, not from the top down."

As a result, Trumka declared, the Democratic platform, which he helped draft, "is the most pro-union platform I've seen in my 50 years" in the labor movement.

Capehart, however, challenged Trumka by saying those same blue-collar white voters, especially men, saw Trump as blue-collar, too, despite his palatial Park Avenue digs and Mar-A-Lago estate. The AFL-CIO chief replied he believes those voters saw Trump as "a guy who said 'I'll come in and change the rules for you. He's changed them all right. Our (worker) health and safety are threatened. Our wages are threatened. Our pensions are threatened. Our rights are threatened. And workers aren't stupid. When you take away" those safeguards and standard of living, they know it.

But as unionists hit the campaign trail for Biden and running mate Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif. — at least in ways the coronavirus pandemic's restrictions will let them campaign — they face another barrier in talking Biden with their colleagues: A 10-percentage point lead for Trump over Biden in handling the economy, despite the current official jobless rate of 10.2 percent, at least 31 million unemployed and GOP refusal to extend the \$600 weekly federal unemployment relief checks through the end of January.

So Biden, Trumka said, must make the case by facing forward, emphasizing platform planks and his own record in proposing and pushing through a large public works job creation program, centered around both traditional infrastructure and green jobs.

Those plans, Trumka again emphasized, are "geared toward working people" particularly blue-collar workers "and giving them a fair shake."

"What's Donald Trump gonna do?" Trumka asked sarcastically. "Say 'I lost (you) 12.9 million jobs this year?'" That's the minimum number that disappeared when the coronavirus-caused closures plunged the U.S. into the deepest crash since the Great Depression.

The pandemic and its impact will also be a big worker theme on the campaign trail, Trumka predicted. Biden has already started in on that, with a hard-hitting pre-convention critique of Trump's malfeasance and offering his own plan.

It starts with everyone nationwide wearing anti-virus face masks in public whenever outside or in public spaces such as restaurants, stores or hotel lobbies.

Trumka also noted that Trump's predecessor, Democrat Barack Obama, who was Biden's boss, had federal anti-pandemic structures in place. Those structures helped the U.S. respond quickly and effectively to the 2013-16 Ebola pandemic in West Africa. U.S. aid and technical expertise helped confine it there and prevent it from spreading. Trump dismantled the whole apparatus, Trumka said, leaving the U.S. virtually defenseless against the coronavirus, and then ducked responsibility. Trump also wants to send all kids back to school, regardless of anti-coronavirus readiness, or lack of it.

"He wouldn't even help us get PPE," Trumka said, referring to personal protective equipment: masks, ventilators, hazmat suits and protective gloves. "We still had to provide these ourselves. Thousands of (union) workers got sick and several hundred have died."

Overall, the latest figures from the most authoritative source, Johns Hopkins University, show that as of mid-afternoon Aug. 18, 5.469 million people have tested positive for the virus since the pandemic was declared March 13 and 171,343 have died.

"You can't fix the economy" — Trump's mantra — "until you fix the pandemic," Trumka said.

Trades upgrade prominent glass box

By Marty Mulcahy
Editor

DETROIT — The plain, modern four-story "footstool" to the opulent 40-story Guardian Building is getting an update.

Constructed in 1972 to house the long-defunct Detroit Federal Savings and Loan company immediately east of the Guardian Building, the now-empty low-rise former bank building is under renovation for use by another bank.

It will be known as the Capital One Cafe, and include a new facade, a pedestrian-friendly patio and a Peet's coffee shop. It will be Capital One's first Michigan location, located at Woodward and Congress, and will offer branch-like services and financial services like credit counseling.

General contractor Walbridge is managing the 30,000-square-foot building's interior and exterior renovations. The bank will take up 7,000 square feet on two floors, and the remainder will be available for lease. The Elia Group, based in Birmingham, purchased the property last November from Wayne County for \$4.65 million.

"We are extremely excited to bring this project from concept to reality," said Zaid Elia, founder and CEO of The Elia Group. "The property has been sitting vacant for well over 20 years and through a concerted, forward-thinking effort with our team, Wayne County, the city of Detroit, and many others, the iconic 511 Woodward building will once again be a vibrant part of the city's landscape, growing workforce, and visitors."

The building facing Detroit's main thoroughfare, Woodward Avenue, is more prominent than "iconic." Faced with a curtain wall of bronze-colored mirrored glass, the building is hardly remarkable architecturally, and it has twice escaped demolition in favor of becoming a parking lot. The site itself does have some historic significance.

A State of Michigan historic marker at the site marks the installation of the first service by what later became Michigan Bell. The marker reads: "On September 22, 1877, a Bell telephone was installed on this site in the drugstore operated by Frederick Stearns. An iron wire strung along rooftops connected the store with the Stearns laboratory a half-mile away at the foot of Fifth Street. This service, only eighteen months after Alexander Graham Bell patented his invention, was the first to be offered by the organization which eventually developed into the Michigan Bell Telephone Company."

The renovated structure will have new Low-E glass, the addition of a deep screen wall over the facade, development of an exterior plaza, and a new roof.

"This is another key piece of property identified in our recovery plan that we are putting back into productive use after it sat idle for years," said Wayne County Executive Warren Evans. "There has been tremendous interest in the building and in Wayne County, and this deal reflects that. We are happy to help attract a national tenant like Capital One to the region. It shows that investing in Detroit and Wayne County continues to make a lot of sense."



WHAT WILL BE the glass-encased Capital One Cafe, which seems like a "footstool" to the tall Guardian Building behind it.



CAULKING WINDOWS at what will be the Capital One Cafe in Detroit are Mike Blatz and Ken Shannon of Glaziers and Glassworkers Local 357. They're employed by Modern Mirror and Glass.



WE ASKED the crew of Iron Workers Local 25 members working at the Capital One Cafe in Detroit to pause what they were doing and gather for a photo. They include (l-r) Jesse Schroeder, Chris Adams and Jeff Hamric. They're employed by Ideal Contracting.

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Too much water



SIGNIFICANT EROSION plagued F.J. McLain State Park in Houghton County early in the Great Lakes high water levels crisis. Campsites, a park road and other features needed to be moved away from the shoreline.

By John Pepin
Michigan Department of Natural Resources

From the Porcupine Mountains to Lime Island and Harrisville to Tawas and Van Buren state parks, record or near-record Great Lakes water levels have produced powerful impacts forcing the closure of numerous facilities.

These impacts include flooding, extensive erosion and destruction or damage to countless shoreline features, ranging from homes to harbors.

Along with the closure of campsites, trails, roads, boating access sites and recreation areas, high water levels have also created numerous hazards for boaters, swimmers and even wildlife.

“Over the past few years, the rising Great Lakes have posed significant challenges to maintaining our recreation facilities across the state,” said Ron Olson, chief of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources’ Parks and Recreation Division. “In turn, these challenges have increased costs to our already strapped infrastructure improvements budget, even before the additional impacts from the coronavirus pandemic.”

Among the noted closures affecting DNR-managed facilities

are more than 20 boating access sites, campsites at Harrisville, Leelanau, Muskegon and Young state parks and submerged electrical conduits at Mackinac Island State Harbor.

Lime Island Recreation Area, in the eastern Upper Peninsula, is closed for the season because of submerged docks, as is the Hammond Bay State Harbor on Lake Huron.

Olson said Orchard Beach State Park in Manistee has had acute shoreline damage, forcing relocation of a historic shelter, which is in danger of falling into Lake Michigan. The storm water drainage system is also being redesigned to help protect the eroding bank. The cost for those activities tops \$3 million.

Records and reasons. According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, except for Lake Ontario, the remaining four Great Lakes and Lake St. Clair each have logged monthly mean highwater records at some point this year. Lake Ontario last hit a record high in September 2019.

Annual water levels, fueled by snowmelt and rainfall, rise in the spring to midsummer – when there is increased sunshine, warmth and evaporation – and then start to decline into fall where

they remain throughout the winter as snow accumulates.

Depending on rainfall dynamics, the waters of all five of the Great Lakes are projected to subside below record levels by the end of the year. Preliminary estimates show precipitation in the Great Lakes Basin was slightly below average in June.

“The primary drivers of water level fluctuations are changing weather patterns and resulting fluctuations in water supply,” said Chris Warren, a professional engineer with the Army Corps’ Detroit District.

The Great Lakes Basin includes 14,000 miles of shoreline along eight states and two Canadian provinces, with 200,000 square miles of land and 95,000 square miles of water. The basin covers a total of 2,212 miles from eastern Minnesota and northern Wisconsin to the Gulf of St. Lawrence in the Atlantic Ocean.

After more than a decade of low Great Lakes water levels, including record lows, the trend toward higher water began in 2013, marked by a record rise and record highs, Warren said.

Through December 2019, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s National Centers for Environmental

Information, the preceding 12-, 24-, 48- and 60-month periods were the wettest on the Great Lakes in more than 120 years.

“We’re seeing some of the highest water levels in recorded history on the Great Lakes,” said Keith Kompoltowicz, chief of the Army Corps’ Watershed Hydrology Branch. “And that’s the result of very wet weather experienced over the last several years.”

Widespread effects. The Michigan Sea Grant website said “even shallow, slow-moving floodwaters can become a major hazard.”

“In addition to damaging homes, businesses, power lines, agricultural fields, roadways and other infrastructure, extreme storms and floods can also wash high levels of nitrogen, phosphorus and other nutrients into rivers and streams, where they can lead to harmful algae blooms, give invasive fish and plant species new routes for moving from one water body to another, create damp environments that encourage the growth of mildew, mold, harmful bacteria and mosquito larvae, tempt people to swim, drive, fish, wade or boat in potentially hazardous waters. Fast-moving currents, underwater obstructions and waterborne contaminants can all threaten the health and safety of people who take risks in floodwaters,” the website states.

Michigan DNR conservation officers have offered important tips for boaters given the high-water conditions prevailing on many waterways across the state.

“Some of our officers have witnessed vessels attempt to take a shortcut through channels marked by a buoy. Buoys and markers are in place to communicate a change in water levels that could pose a risk to boaters, including obstacles under the surface of the water or shallow water that has recently become impassable,” said Gary Hagler, chief of the DNR Law Enforcement Division. “Each conservation officer is assigned to patrol specific areas of the state, so they are familiar with the fluctuating water levels. We recommend researching

the area you’ll be navigating and remaining vigilant to all markers and buoys.”

Higher waters can cause fast-flowing currents, deeper and colder water, unpredictable conditions and more debris floating under the water’s surface – especially on rivers. The law requires that all vessels, including kayaks and canoes, be equipped with a personal flotation device for each person on board.

Task force formed. After a Michigan High Water Coordinating Summit in February, convened by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, several governmental agencies created the Michigan High Water Action Team to facilitate collaboration and resource sharing in response to public health and safety challenges posed by the state’s historic highwater levels.

Members of the team include the Michigan departments of natural resources, state police, health and human services, insurance and financial services, and environment, great lakes and energy, in addition to groups representing local and federal officials.

“High water levels affect every corner of the state, from Great Lakes shorelines to inland lakes to rivers and canals,” said Liesl Clark, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy director. “There is no short-term end in sight, which means homeowners and communities will feel the impacts for quite some time. The Michigan High Water Action Team will make sure we continue to have robust discussions at all levels of government to help all Michiganders.”

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District, said its personnel are “committed to ensuring public safety while providing technical expertise and assistance during this time of high water around the Great Lakes.”

The Army Corps has author-

ity to provide technical and planning assistance for floodplain management planning. The Great Lakes Hydraulics and Hydrology Office forecasts and monitors water levels of the Great Lakes and the conditions that lead to water level fluctuations.

Additional concerns. Beyond the Great Lakes, problems with high water levels also have been persistent on inland waters, including lakes and streams. Inland water levels vary from place to place given winter snowfall, the water content of that snow and rainfall amounts. Precipitation also has raised groundwater levels.

“All of this means water has less places to go, and frequency and magnitude of flooding events can increase,” said the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy’s webpage on high water.

In addition to numerous hazards that may be encountered by boaters given high water levels, swimmers and waders can underestimate the strength and power of lake currents leading to dangerous and tragic circumstances.

There have been more than 50 drownings reported on the Great Lakes this year, most from Lake Michigan.

Impacts to wildlife. High water also can produce negative circumstances for wildlife.

DNR wildlife biologists say many wildlife species are adaptable and can relocate when high water threatens their habitat. However, some ground-nesting birds like eastern meadowlarks, wild turkeys, mallards and piping plovers can experience nest failures when flooding occurs, which can mean the loss of young birds.

Wakes generated by watercraft also can have harmful impacts for wildlife. To help alleviate flooding, wake restrictions are in place to protect shoreline habitat for fish and animals.

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