Northrop Grumman plans to close shipyard by 2013

As members of Local 1814 (Bridge City, La.) report for work at the Avondale shipyard each day, they do so with a sense of foreboding. Unless something changes dramatically, Northrop Grumman will shut down Avondale, eliminating about 4,500 jobs by 2013. Nearly 1,000 Boilermakers worked at the shipyard and at the smaller Tallulah shipyard until last fall, when the company began laying off workers. The firm ceased operations at Tallulah in late 2010. By early Feb. 2011, only about 550 L-1814 members remained at Avondale.

Plight of Avondale workers remains in doubt

Marinette shipyard workers await $3.6 billion construction boom

The LCS is a new class of warship that is optimized for shallow water operations. Fast and versatile, the ship is capable of taking on such missions as anti-submarine warfare, mine-hunting, and drug interdiction.

L-1814 President Chris Burnett stands near the bow section of an LPD ship under construction at the Avondale shipyard in 2009.

Marinette shipyard workers await $3.6 billion construction boom

The First U.S. Navy Littoral Combat Ship, USS Freedom (LCS 1), built by L-696 members at the Marinette Marine Corp. shipyard in Marinette, Wis., conducts a speed run during builders’ trials. The ship is designed for access and dominance in coastal waters. Photo courtesy of Lockheed Martin.

New Navy contract calls for 10 more littoral combat ships

THE WORK OUTLOOK for members of Local 696 (Marinette, Wis.) has taken a decidedly positive turn in recent months. Last December, the U.S. Navy awarded Lockheed Martin a $3.6 billion contract to continue building littoral combat ships (LCS) at the Marinette Marine Corp. shipyard in northeast Wisconsin. The contract includes options for 10 additional warships through 2015.

The LCS is a new class of warship that is optimized for shallow water operations. Fast and versatile, the ship is capable of taking on such missions as anti-submarine warfare, mine-hunting, and drug interdiction.

Lockheed and Marinette Marine began work on their first two littoral combat ships under an earlier Navy contract. USS Freedom (LCS 1) was delivered in 2008; USS Fort Worth (LCS 3) is scheduled for delivery in 2012. The 10-ship order is in addition to the first two LCSs. The LCS 10 contract was signed in December and is expected to be delivered in 2015.

L-696’s interim president, Jim Eckert, said the Navy contract is good news for the local shipyard and the region’s economy. He said the contract will help keep workers employed and the facilities running.

Northrop Grumman is currently the only company running a shipyard in Louisiana, so the potential loss of the Avondale shipyard would be a major blow to the state’s shipbuilding industry. The shipyard employs about 4,500 workers, and about 1,000 Boilermakers work at the facility. The company said it is considering closing the shipyard in 2013.

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to those first two vessels. The Navy has proposed building a total of 55 littoral combat ships.
A competing consortium led by Austal USA also received a 10-ship contract under a different design. Austal is constructing LCS vessels at its nonunion shipyard in Mobile, Ala.
"This contract is huge, not only for the people who work at the Marinette Marine shipyard, but for the entire area within 100 miles," said L-696 President Bill Lockhart. "There just aren’t that many good jobs around here."
International Rep Len Gunderson agreed, adding, "The economic impact of this contract will be felt throughout the region. This will be a job creator not only for the shipyard but for suppliers as well. It will be good for a lot of communities."
Jim Pressley, International Vice President for Industrial Sector Operations, said, "This is exciting news for the Boilermakers’ Industrial Sector, especially in shipbuilding. This industry has been hit hard over the years as the Navy has scaled back its fleet and commercial shipbuilders have faced rising overseas competition. In this particular instance, an Italian company, Fincantieri, is bringing new jobs to the area, particularly in these tough economic times."
L-696 members ratify new agreement
NEWS OF THE $3.6 billion Navy order and the promise of continuing work — helped bring to a close 10 months of contract negotiations between L-696 members and Marinette Marine. Members overwhelmingly approved a six-year collective bargaining agreement on Jan. 21. They had been working without a contract since March 7, 2010. According to Lockhart, a major sticking point was whether the company or the union employees would pay for a new pension assessment. Under the new CBA, Marinette Marine will pay for the first year’s assessment while L-696 members pay those costs in the remaining years of the contract.
The new CBA provides wage increases totaling 20 percent over the life of the contract. A first-year wage increase of 2.75 percent is retroactive to March 7, 2010, with subsequent annual increases of 3.0 percent in years two through four, 4.0 percent in year five, and 4.25 percent in year six.
L-696 members also agreed to assist in developing a helper classification so that unskilled local area residents could have an opportunity to begin working at the shipyard and learn a trade.
Lockhart said other key changes included streamlining the grievance procedure and improvements in per diem pay, shift premiums, safety shoe expenses, and other benefits.
"I would like to thank our bargaining committee, International Rep Leonard Gunderson, the union
stewards, and everyone who took part in making this contract happen,” he added.

L-449 members may participate in LCS effort

FINCANTIERI PURCHASED Marinette Marine Corp., Bay Shipbuilding, and Cleveland Ship Repair in 2008 from the Manitowac Company, a Wisconsin firm that is now focused on building cranes and food-service equipment.

In addition to upgrading its facilities at Marinette Marine, Fincantieri is also investing in a new dry dock and other improvements at Bay Shipbuilding, where Local 449 (Sturgeon Bay, Wis.) members build and repair commercial ships for the Great Lakes fleet and other markets.

Bay Shipbuilding may also be involved in some of the LCS work, according to a statement by Richard McCreary, CEO and president of Marinette Marine, in a Green Bay Press-Gazette article.

WeLDER dANieL seBERO works on a stainless steel pipe that will become part of a ship’s vent system.

SHiPFiTTER CLARENCE (CHIP) FELMER grinds the edge of a side shell for the USS Fort Worth.

OUTFiTTER GLEn LAUZEr adds insulation to a section of ductwork.

Per capita tax to increase 40 cents in 2011

Constitution calls for monthly union dues to increase by twice that amount

THE BUREAU OF LABOR Statistics (BLS) has announced a 1.7 percent average increase in hourly earnings for the manufacturing industry from July 2009 to July 2010. As a result, the International will raise its per capita tax in 2011 by 1.7 percent (40 cents), and monthly union dues will increase by twice that amount ($0.80), effective Jan. 1, 2011.

These increases are in accordance with the Boilermakers’ Constitution. Article 12.2.2 states the monthly per capita tax will be adjusted annually by the BLS average percent increase in earnings for manufacturing, rounded to the nearest nickel. Article 31.2.2 states that monthly union dues will increase by twice the annual adjusted per capita tax increase.

Applying the 2009-2010 BLS 1.7 percent increase to the 2010 per capita tax rate of $22.75 equals $0.3867 (40 cents when rounded to the nearest nickel), making the 2011 per capita tax rate $23.15.

Monthly union dues vary by division, but the average rate will increase by twice the annual adjusted per capita tax increase (two x 40 cents = $0.80).

The automatic dues increase was created by convention action in 1973 and has been in effect since 1975 so that revenue will keep up with inflation. Prior to that time, convention delegates had to vote for all dues increases. When they met only every four years, that meant they had to try to predict wage growth and expense growth over the next four years (now it’s five). By making the increase automatic and pegging it rising wages, they ensured rises in revenue kept pace with inflation and did not create a hardship on members, since the increases were linked to wages.

FROM 2004 TO 2009, the average monthly wage for unionized workers in the manufacturing industry increased by $508 from $3,124 to $3,632, while the monthly union dues paid by Boilermakers increased by only $6.30. In the same period, nonunion wages increased by only $392 a month, from $2,448 to $2,840. This means union members in 2009 made an average of $792 more per month in wages alone than their nonunion counterparts ($3,632 vs. $2,840).
Union dollars put union members to work

Boilermakers invest in pediatric center that Local 5 members may help build

THE BOILERMAKERS UNION, as an HIT investor, is helping to finance a new pediatric center that HIT anticipates will employ New York Local 5 members in its construction. The project is being funded by labor pension capital through HIT — the ALF-CIO Housing Investment Trust. HIT is providing $100 million to finance the new home for the Elizabeth Seton Pediatric Center in Yonkers, N.Y.

HIT Chairman John Sweeney joined local labor, business, and community leaders at the construction site Oct. 7 to announce the investment. All on-site construction work will be performed by union labor, creating an estimated 800 jobs. The project will allow the pediatric center to move from a leased space in Midtown Manhattan to a new 165,000-square-foot facility in Yonkers, offering state-of-the-art care for medically-fragile children. The $100 million financing is the largest single investment in HIT’s 45-year history. The $116 million development will feature a 137-bed in-patient center and an on-site school for resident children on a 6.5 acre site.

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS on a union-financed, union-built pediatric center in Yonkers, N.Y.

“Other numbers demonstrate the pressing need to provide workers with a voice in the workplace.”

— Labor Secretary Hilda Solis

Union membership declines by .6 million

Recession, construction fall-off contribute to drop

AFTER TICKING UPWARDS in 2008, union membership in the United States declined for the second straight year, dropping by 612,000 workers in 2010, according to a new report by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Last year, total union membership — both private and public sectors — slipped from 15.3 million to 14.7 million workers, from 12.3 percent of the U.S. workforce to just 11.9 percent. Slightly less than 12 workers out of a hundred belonged to a union at the end of 2010.

In the private sector, the unionization rate stood at 6.9 percent, down from 7.2 percent in 2009. The report showed there were 7.6 million union members in the public sector in 2010 compared with 7.1 million in the private sector.

Writing for the Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR), senior researcher Ben Zipperer stated that union membership fell in 2009 at about the same rate as employment losses. However, he noted that in 2010 “unions continued to lose members... even as employment losses slowed.”

Zipperer cited heavy losses in non-residential construction, which is heavily unionized. “Large job losses in the industry will lower the overall unionization rate,” he said.

The top six states for union density last year included New York (24.2 percent), Alaska (22.9 percent), Hawaii (21.8 percent), Washington (19.4 percent), California (17.5 percent), and New Jersey (17.1 percent). Eight states had union densities below 5.0 percent: North Carolina (3.2 percent), Arkansas and Georgia (both with 4.0 percent), Louisiana (4.3 percent), Mississippi (4.5 percent), South Carolina and Virginia (both with 4.6 percent), and Tennessee (4.7 percent).

In a statement released with the BLS report, Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis stressed the continuing economic advantage that union jobs offer workers. She said the median wage and salary income for full-time union workers is $917 per week, while non-union workers earn $717 per week.

“When coupled with existing data showing that union members have access to better health care, retirement, and leave benefits, today’s numbers make it clear that union jobs are not only good jobs, they are central to restoring our middle class,” Solis said. “As workers across the country continue to face lower wages and difficulty finding work due to the recent recession, these numbers demonstrate the pressing need to provide workers with a voice in the workplace and protect their right to organize and bargain collectively.”

Union Sportsmen’s Alliance gets new logo

THE UNION SPORTSMEN’S Alliance (USA) unveiled its new logo last fall. A circular emblem in blue and green, the logo includes icons depicting a white-tail deer, a bass, and a duck. According to USA, these are the types of game most pursued by alliance members.

“The USA was founded in 2007 to be a hunting and fishing club for union members, retirees, and their families. It originally functioned as a program of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP). In 2010, the alliance became a stand-alone, non-profit organization.

The Boilermakers are one of nine charter unions that support the USA.

For more information about the Union Sportsmen’s Alliance, visit www.unionsportsmen.org.
Northrop announced last July that it would close its Louisiana shipyards and consolidate Gulf Coast shipbuilding operations at its Pascagoula, Miss., shipyard, where nearly 1,500 members of Local 693 are employed. The firm initially said it would consider selling its Gulf Coast shipbuilding facilities but later stated it would spin off the operations instead.

The company had originally planned to shutter Avondale before 2013, but in Oct. 2010 the U.S. Navy committed to completing two LPD ships that were already under construction. The LPD is an amphibious transport dock.

Responding to public outcries about the closing, the Navy also agreed to move up procurement of new double-hull oil tankers from 2017 to 2014 to allow Avondale an opportunity to bid on the work. In addition, the Navy also agreed to move up procurement of ships that were already under construction. The Navy stated that once these ships were completed, Avondale would be allowed to continue operating beyond 2013. However, Northrop has declined to bid on the tankers.

L-1814 members have joined with other unions on the property and the Metal Trades Department in a “Save Our Shipyard” campaign. Community leaders, local elected officials, the Louisiana congressional delegation, and even members of the New Orleans Saints football team have gotten involved. Avondale supporters have expressed hope that another company might buy the shipyard, and in fact Cleveland Shipbuilding Group has made an offer. However, Northrop has refused to consider selling its operations.

Meanwhile, the Boilermakers union and the AFL-CIO have worked closely with federal law leaders, local elected officials, the Louisiana congressional delegation, and even members of the New Orleans Saints football team have gotten involved. Avondale supporters have expressed hope that another company might buy the shipyard, and in fact Cleveland Shipbuilding Group has made an offer. However, Northrop has refused to consider selling its operations.

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2011 LEAP issues target trade, clean coal, shipbuilding, and worker benefits

WHEN DELEGATES TO THE 43rd annual Legislative Education Action Program (LEAP) conference gather in Washington, D.C., March 21, they will encounter a much different political picture than existed last year.

The Nov. 2010 midterm elections produced an historic number of new members of Congress. Delegates will need to introduce our union to the staffs of these new representatives and senators, and outline our priorities on the issues impacting the Brotherhood's diverse membership.

Many new Republican members of Congress — particularly those backed by the tea party movement — are likely to be hostile to organized labor's legislative and policy goals. Nevertheless, the Boilermakers union must make our voices heard if we are to advance an agenda that creates jobs and protects worker benefits.

A number of initiatives we had hoped would become law in the last Congress were blocked by Republicans and the powerful business lobby. These initiatives (such as reforming broken labor laws) are unlikely to gain traction in the current political environment.

Facing the reality of a Republican-controlled House, our union will take a strategic approach to make progress where possible while guarding against attacks on essential programs.

Key issues that Boilermakers will discuss on Capitol Hill are described below.

**Advancing Clean Energy from Coal**

LAST YEAR, OUR union was a leading voice behind efforts to invest in new energy technologies that will encourage energy independence, reduce harmful emissions, and create millions of good-paying jobs. A comprehensive energy bill — one that puts a price on greenhouse gas emissions to finance investments in clean coal and other advanced energy technologies — is now off the table. We must continue our efforts to encourage deployment of these essential energy solutions.

Our highest priority for construction sector Boilermakers remains investment in carbon capture and storage (CCS). The United States must establish itself as a leader in this job-creating technology to ensure a strong future for coal-fired power generation. Legislation introduced in the prior Congress (the Carbon Capture and Storage Deployment Act) would have established the framework we need to move this technology off the drawing board and begin unlocking the enormous job opportunities possible through the deployment of CCS technology.

- Introduce by Senators John D. Rockefeller IV (D-WV) and George V. Voinovich (R-Ohio), the act would achieve the following: 1) authorize a cooperative industry-government research and development program in the Department of Energy’s Office of Fossil Energy, 2) establish a $20 billion “Pioneer Phase” fund to help offset technological and economic risks for early technology developers, 3) create an “Early Adopter Program” with tax credits based on the amount of carbon dioxide captured, 4) set a technology standard requiring power plants to be retrofitted with demonstrated CCS technology, and 5) establish a legal and regulatory framework for long-term stewardship and liability.

In addition to supporting this act, we will urge Congress to adopt legislation establishing a “Clean Energy Development Administration” to provide loans and loan guarantees to the private sector to invest in the deployment of innovating energy technologies.

**Rebuilding the Shipbuilding Industrial Base**

AS WITH PREVIOUS conferences, we will continue to press Congress to adopt sensible policies to encourage employment in America’s shipyards. The urgency of these issues is increasing as shipyards continue to decline and consolidate. In the past year, two shipyards that employ Boilermakers have threatened closure, and the future work prospects in the sector remain tenuous.

Specific recommendations for the Navy and Coast Guard budgets will be developed upon the release of President Obama’s budget. The Boilermakers remain committed to the goals and principles of the National Shipbuilding Budget Policy Act, introduced in the 111th Congress by Congressman Rob Wittman. These principles call for a more robust and consistent annual shipbuilding budget to help reach the minimum goal of a 313-ship navy. At a minimum, a $20 billion annual shipbuilding budget will be required to meet those goals.

Two other long-standing legislative priorities remain on our agenda. First, our union will continue to call on Congress to restrict the Navy’s practice of leasing foreign-built vessels for long-term defense use. Currently, evidence suggests the Navy relies on as many as 12 foreign-owned, foreign-built vessels for military sealift support — offering no employment opportunities and contributing to the decline of the defense industrial base.

Second, we will continue to call for increased funding of the Title XI Ship Loan Guarantee Program. Replacement of our nation’s aging Jones Act fleet is critical to America’s economic and security needs. The Title XI Program provides small- and medium-sized ship owners with affordable finance rates at reasonable terms to allow ship owners to replace and expand their fleet. Commercial shipbuilding creates and sustains good jobs in U.S. shipyards, and provides modern sealift capability for national security. An FY 2012 appropriation of $60 million will finance up to $1.2 billion in new ship construction, creating and sustaining roughly 13,000 U.S. shipyard jobs, and tens of thousands of jobs in the supplier base.

**Trade Agreements and China’s Currency Manipulation**

BOILERMAKERS AND OTHER union workers in the manufacturing sector know all too well the negative impacts of a trade policy written by and for multi-national corporations. Since the enactment of NAFTA, so called “free trade” agreements have encouraged business interests to drive down wages, outsource jobs to low-wage countries, and undermine American manufacturing. Unfortunately, pursuing a misguided and shortsighted trade agenda has happened under both Republican and Democratic administrations.

Korea Free Trade Agreement: This year, the Obama Administration announced its intention to pursue ratification of a trade agreement negotiated by President George W. Bush with South Korea. The agreement remains fundamentally flawed, and we must oppose it. Organized labor has argued for years that the investment and government procurement provisions in the Korea deal will encourage off-shoring.

It is clear that in both the United States and South Korea, workers continue to face repeated challenges to their exercise of fundamental human rights on the job — especially freedom of association and the right to organize and bargain collectively. This deal does nothing to improve or strengthen the provisions negotiated by Bush in these crucial areas. It is essential that both countries bring their labor laws and practices fully into compliance with international standards prior to implementation of the agreement.

Colombia Free Trade Agreement: The U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement (FTA) would give special trade preferences to a government that has done little to respect workers’ rights and whose record on labor rights is among the worst in the world. The agreement — like the Korea FTA — is another in a series of bad trade pacts negotiated by the Bush White House that have contributed to a U.S. trade deficit of $677 billion in 2008, massive job loss, and shrinking paychecks.

Workers across both countries oppose passage of the FTA until certain changes are made. First, workers must be able to fully exercise, without fear, core international labor rights. Second, Colombia must make real progress to end the impunity granted those who commit violence against trade unionists. And last, the agreement must be amended to...
address persistent criticisms of the trade model.

End China’s Currency Manipulation: The United States must pursue fundamental changes in our trade relationship with China and seek to ensure American workers and businesses are not placed at a disadvantage in the global economy.

China’s currency manipulation is a major cause of America’s growing trade deficit. Since China joined the WTO in 2001, 2.4 million jobs have been lost or displaced as a result of China’s growing trade disparity with China. Jobs have been lost in every Congressional district. According to most economists, China’s currency is deliberately undervalued by at least 40 percent. This policy artificially raises the price of U.S. exports and gives Chinese goods a competitive edge in our market and other markets around the globe.

Last year the House, in an overwhelming bipartisan vote, adopted the “Currency Reform for Fair Trade Act.” This legislation strengthens the Commerce Department’s authority to use countervailing duties on imports that benefit from a country’s currency manipulation practices. Unfortunately, the clock ran out before the bill could be adopted by the Senate and sent to the president. This is the year to get this important legislation across the finish line.

Protect Worker Benefits

WITH MORE ANTI-LABOR senators and members of Congress, we will need to stay focused and proactive to protect the programs on which Americans rely. While our nation must take appropriate steps to address our long-term fiscal challenges, we cannot balance the budget on the backs of those most at risk.

Unemployment Insurance: On Dec. 16, 2010 Congress approved an $85 billion tax bill allowing extended unemployment compensation to continue for an additional 13 months. Because UI has to be brought up for renewal by Congress under the Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation program, Americans will remain uncertain about their unemployment benefits during this protracted recovery. We will be back fighting for the renewal of these benefits later this year if companies refuse to start hiring workers and unemployment remains at the currently high rate of 9%.

With state budgets already stretched thin, many states are struggling to keep up with the demands on their UI system.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Benefits: TAA benefits provide reemployment services and benefits to workers who have lost their jobs or suffered a reduction of hours and wages resulting from increased imports or shifts in production outside the United States. To qualify, workers must be directly impacted by imports or a shift in production of their firm to any country with a free trade agreement with the United States, or by certain other shifts in production.

Some Republicans, including Senator Jon Kyl (R-AZ), have made cynical attempts to tie the extension of TAA benefits to passage of more free trade agreements — the very policies that result in more workers needing to rely on government programs for retraining and support. We must ensure that TAA is extended this year, regardless of the outcome of debates on more trade deals.

Social Security: Social Security, arguably the federal government’s most successful and most appreciated program, will take center stage in 2011 as Congress and the White House attempt to deal with the national deficit. Already some lawmakers are calling for increasing the retirement age and cutting benefits, among other suggestions. However, the truth is Social Security is not in crisis, and it has not caused the federal deficit. Currently, it has a $2.6 trillion accumulated surplus, which will grow to $4.2 trillion by 2025. Social Security can pay all benefits in full through 2037. Moreover, Social Security’s long-range funding gap, which will appear 27 years from now, is very modest — the equivalent of the costs of maintaining the Bush tax cuts for the top two percent of Americans.

There will be a vigorous debate over the future of Social Security, and the Department of Government Affairs will be fully engaged in it. As in the past, the Department will strongly oppose any attempts to “privatize” Social Security or otherwise undermine the foundation for a secure retirement for most Americans.

L-199 helps reform Florida redistricting laws

Constitutional changes will limit gerrymandering

A NON-PARTISAN group seeking to reform Florida’s redistricting laws has cited Local Lodge 199 (Jacksonville, Fla.) as one of the key players in its successful ballot initiative last November. The initiative, backed by Fair Districts Florida, included two constitutional amendments aimed at discouraging the practice of gerrymandering. It passed by more than 60 percent of the vote.

Fair Districts Florida campaign chair Ellen Frieden, in a letter to L-199, said, “You and your local are at the top of the list (of organizations that partnered with her group.) You . . . were there every step of the way. You and your union have brought benefit to the people of the state of Florida for decades to come.”

Ferguson said his lodge teamed up with Fair Districts Florida over a two-year period, offering support through signature petitions, sign-making, and radio advertising. “Florida is one of the most gerrymandered states in America,” he said.

Although the practice is legal, gerrymandering is considered by many to be unfair to voters. Parties in power can use it to carve out population segments that will most likely elect their candidates, sometimes to the detriment of racial minorities and other groups. In certain areas of the country, gerrymandering has all but eliminated competitive opposition, leaving some voters with no real chance of electing a candidate who reflects their interests.

The constitutional amendments passed by Floridians assert that no redistricting plans will be drawn “with the intent to favor or disfavor a political party or an incumbent” or “with the intent or result of denying or abridging the equal opportunity of racial or language minorities to participate in the political process ...” The amendments also require that districts be contiguous, as equal in population as feasible, and compact. In addition, districts must use existing city, county, and geographical boundaries where feasible.

Two U.S. representatives from Florida have filed suit to prevent one of the amendments from becoming law, arguing that it interferes with their official duties. The Republican-controlled Florida House is also opposing the same amendment and is seeking to intervene in the lawsuit.

While the Florida amendments discourage gerrymandering, the changes leave redistricting in the hands of the state legislature and governor. By contrast, California passed a proposition last Nov. 2 that removes redistricting entirely from elected officials and places it in the hands of a commission created for that specific purpose.

Redistricting occurs every 10 years, after the national census has been completed. The next redistricting process will occur in 2012, ahead of the national elections in November.

In 36 states, redistricting is performed by state legislatures with the approval of the governor. In Florida, both branches of government are under Republican control. According to some political analysts, Republicans can expect to gain at least a dozen U.S. House seats in the November 2012 elections as a result of redistricting.

At least in Florida, those gains may be minimized, thanks in part to the political activism of L-199.
First all-Canadian project management course held in Vancouver

17 members from six locals attend

SEVENTEEN CONSTRUCTION Boilermakers from six local lodges attended the first project management course to be held in Canada with all-Canadian participants. The training took place in Vancouver, British Columbia, Nov. 7-12.

The course was taught by Dale “Skipper” Branscum, Director of Construction Division Services, and Gerry Klimo, L-154 (Pittsburgh) safety training coordinator.

Training coordinators Scot McMahon, L-128 (Toronto, Ontario) and Al Bennett, L-359 (Vancouver) audited the program.

“This was an excellent course, and we received very positive feedback from participants,” said Grant Jacobs, Canadian National Director of Apprenticeship and Education. “Both instructors excelled at extracting real-life experiences from the class, which included members who have worked as general foremen, superintendents, and project managers.”

L-128 BM-ST Jim Watson, who enrolled in the course in order to evaluate it, said it offered “a window into the world” of contractors and owners and the challenges “they face in a highly competitive and adverse market.” He added that he would recommend the course to other business managers, area representatives “and members currently serving as project managers or who are in a position to ascend to that level.”

The course included 18 sections covering the various disciplines of project management, such as planning and scheduling, conflict resolution, cost control and tracking, managing customer expectations, and quality control.

Pictured above, l. to r., front row: Berren Sonier, L-73 (Halifax, Nova Scotia); Dan Dutkiwich, L-146 (Edmonton, Alberta); and Steve McGuire, L-128; second row, Scott Brechin, L-146; Greg Florell, L-555 (Winnipeg, Manitoba); Grant Jacobs; Sam Basque, L-73; Jody Pedersen, L-146; and Jerry Flaherty, L-203 (St. John’s, Newfoundland); third row, Gerry Klimo; j’Amey Holroyd, L-146 training coordinator; at center of group, Andy Ogrodnik, L-555; J. P. Gogosha, L-128; Hugh Cameron, L-128; and Skipper Branscum; back row, Scot McMahon; Dave Roy, L-128; Terry Wood, L-73; Troy MacDonald, L-73; Jim Watson; Duane Gouin, L-359; and Al Bennett.

Local 193 members earn OSHA 30 authorization

TWENTY-NINE MEMBERS of Baltimore Local 193 earned OSHA 30 authorization over a six-month period last year by completing four MOST-administered training classes. Participants ranged from third-year apprentices to 35-year Boilermakers. William Herd served as primary instructor.

According to Local 193 BM-ST Michael Herd, this is the first class from the lodge to earn the authorization. The members attended classes on weekends so they wouldn’t miss work.

OSHA 30 covers potential hazards and worker safety measures related to scaffolding, rigging, welding, falls, electricity, stairways, ladders, confined space, and other areas. The OSHA 30 class is made up of four components: the OSHA 10 course, Scaffold Erection and Dismantling, Steel Erection, and the OSHA 30-hour completion course. To meet OSHA 30 requirements, all four of these classes have to be completed within a six-month period and be conducted by the same primary instructor.

Chartered in 1912, Local 193 represents workers in the construction industry.

MOST is an acronym for Mobilization, Optimization, Stabilization, and Training — a joint labor and management trust, funded by employer contributions. The trust was established in 1989 by the Boilermakers union and the National Association of Construction Boilermaker Employers to provide safety programs, drug testing, specialty training, and other services for construction members.
Natural gas climate benefits may be overstated

THE ENVIRONMENTAL Protection Agency may soon increase its estimates of life-cycle greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from natural gas-fueled power generation, according to an article in Pro Publica by Abraham Lustgarden. Citing an EPA technical support document, Lustgarden points out that the higher estimates would mean that natural gas is only marginally more climate-friendly than coal.

For years, advocates for natural gas have claimed it produces 50 percent less GHG than coal, making it the preferred fossil fuel for power generation. But those estimates are based primarily on what issues from the smokestack. The EPA working paper suggests that when the estimates include the methane and other pollution emitted when gas is extracted and transported to customers, the difference between coal and natural gas is greatly reduced.

The EPA’s new analysis doubles previous estimates for the amount of methane gas that leaks from loose pipe fittings and is vented from gas wells. Calculations for some gas-field emissions jumped by several hundred percent. Methane levels from the hydraulic fracturing of shale gas were 9,000 times higher than previously reported.

These new calculations suggest natural gas may be as little as 25 percent cleaner than coal, a conclusion reached in 2007 by Paulina Jaramillo, an energy expert and associate professor of engineering and public policy at Carnegie Mellon University. In a paper published in Environmental Science & Technology, she and fellow researchers went so far as to say that a coal plant using carbon capture and storage may actually produce lower GHG emissions than a natural gas plant which must pipe fuel a long distance.

CO2, CH4, and CO2e

WHILE THE NEW studies indicate a much higher release of greenhouse gases as natural gas is extracted and transported, it is especially troubling that methane (CH4) is among those gases. Burning either coal or natural gas produces large quantities of CO2, though natural gas produces less. But methane is a far more potent GHG than CO2. And gas drilling emissions account for an estimated one-fifth of human-caused methane in the atmosphere.

Scientists use the term CO2e (carbon dioxide equivalent) to measure a gas’s global warming strength. EPA calculates methane as being 21 times as potent as CO2, so releasing one ton of methane is equivalent to releasing 21 tons of carbon dioxide. As studies have begun to show more methane is being released than previously thought, the EPAs estimates of natural gas’s GHG emissions has been revised accordingly.

Even this most recent revision may eventually prove too small, according to Robert Howarth, a professor at Cornell University. He points out that as natural gas becomes more widely used, the United States will draw more of it from shale gas. His research suggests that drilling in shale releases 1.3 to 2.1 times as much methane into the atmosphere as gas taken from conventional sources. Shale gas wells rely heavily on “fracking” — using water to fracture the shale around well bores. Howarth contends that this process allows natural gas and methane to escape.

“Even small leakages of natural gas to the atmosphere have very large consequences,” Howarth wrote in a March 2010 memorandum. “[T]he actual number of new jobs we see,” said Abe Breehey, Boilermakers Legislative Director. “But the fact is that for two decades now, a very large portion of Boilermaker work in coal-fired power plants has been installing pollution control equipment.”

Clean air rules could create 1.5 million jobs

CONSTRUCTION BOILERMAKERS could see a rise in work as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency rules push utilities to invest in new pollution controls, according to a report commissioned by Ceres, a coalition of environmentalists and institutional investors.

Many politicians — both Democrats and Republicans — have been saying the EPA’s looming air rules will raise electricity prices and cause older plants to close down, killing jobs, but “New Jobs – Cleaner Air,” published by researchers at the University of Massachusetts Political Economy Research Institute, says investments made to comply with the Clean Air Act are actually good for the economy.

The report quotes the Office of Management and Budget, which said in 2003 that every dollar spent on compliance with the act since 1970 has led to $4 to $8 in economic benefits.

“The bottom line: clean air is a worthwhile investment,” said Mindy Lubber, president of Ceres.

Most of the nearly 1.5 million jobs would be temporary, lasting through 2015, and depend on plants spending nearly $200 billion on pollution controls and building new capacity. The report looked at two EPA rules designed to reduce emissions. The Transport Rule would curtail smog-causing chemicals; the Utility MACT Rule (maximum achievable control technology) would reduce the output of mercury and other hazardous pollutants from boilers. Analysts say these rules are more certain than new or future rules on greenhouse gases, which face opposition in Congress.

“This report is one of the more optimistic job-creation estimates I have seen and may overstate the number of new jobs we see,” said Abe Breehey, Boilermakers Legislative Director. “But the fact is that for two decades now, a very large portion of Boilermaker work in coal-fired power plants has been installing pollution control equipment.”

Comparison of Emissions from Each Segment of the Natural Gas and Petroleum Industries

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<th>REVISED ESTIMATE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total GHG Emissions</td>
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<td>317.4 (3)</td>
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(1) MMTCO2e = CO2 Equivalent in Millions of Metric Tons.
(2) Production includes equipment leaks and intentionally vented emissions both from natural gas and petroleum sectors.
(3) Of this total, the natural gas industry emitted 261 MMTCO2e of methane and 28.50 MMTCO2e of CO2.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Forge goes one million man-hours without lost-time accident

ABOUT 140 BOILERMAKERS working as blacksmiths for Portland Forge in Portland, Ind., joined other union workers and management employees at the facility to celebrate a remarkable milestone last November— one million man-hours without a lost-time accident.

The forge company uses industrial-size hammers, upsetters, and other equipment to shape metal for various products needed by industries like mining, transportation, oil, and gas. Because employees work with heavy machinery and near intense heat (typically reaching 2,400 degrees F.), the potential for serious injury is always present.

L-1620 President Bill Bailey, a 34-year member, said the company has long had a safety program, but in recent years safety has received a stronger emphasis. “We used to have a safety meeting once a month, but now each department meets weekly. We also have a safety committee, and members are encouraged to report safety issues,” he said.

Bailey added that new employees are especially vulnerable to potential injuries, so they are paired with experienced workers. “Over the last six months, the company has hired a lot of new employees, and we’re all working 50-58 hours a week. The equipment we work around is not very forgiving, but we’re doing a good job training new people,” he said. “It’s a good feeling [to reach the safety milestone]. “I hope it continues.”

The most recent safety milestone follows another impressive record reached by Portland Forge workers in 2009, when they went 50 straight weeks without a lost-time accident. Mike Landess, L-1620 secretary-treasurer, stressed that training classes and a plant walk-around inspection provided by Director of Health and Safety Services Mark Garrett have elevated safety awareness while enhancing knowledge about safety issues.

Local 1620, a forging and shop lodge, was chartered in 1941.

Local 555 apprentice receives Langan Award

Mike McMullin named first recipient

LOCAL LODGE 555 (Winnipeg, Manitoba) presented its first Mark Langan Apprentice Achievement Award to Mike McMullin Dec. 1, 2010. The award recognizes apprentices who demonstrate commitment to the Boilermaker trade. It takes into account volunteerism, attendance at union meetings, work ethic on the job, performance in apprenticeship school, and respect by co-workers.

Ted Stark, L-555 business rep and training coordinator, said the award was made possible by a $5,000 memorial donation from Langan’s son, Clinton Langan, and daughter, Shelley Herrick. Mark Langan died April 10, 2010. A member since 1969, he served as the lodge’s recording secretary for one term and as its vice president from 1986 until his retirement in 2002. Stark said Langan was instrumental in constructing L-555’s first in-house welding and training facilities, and was heavily involved in union events, even after his retirement.

McMullin received a $1,000 monetary award along with a plaque. “Mike has shown the same union ideals that Brother Mark Landon stood for and is already a great Boilermaker,” said L-555 BM-ST Dallas Rogers.

Chartered in 1954, L-555 is a construction and shop lodge with jurisdiction in Saskatchewan and northwestern Ontario.
Local 363 repairs 1895 steam tractor

PMC donates material; members provide labor at no cost to museum

The Labor and Industry Museum in Belleville, Ill., was stumped. “Jumbo,” their 12-hp steam engine tractor built in 1895 by Harrison Machine Works in Belleville, was out of commission. Jumbo needed work on the firebox section of its boiler, and the museum couldn’t find an organization willing to make the costly repairs. That is until they called their area Boilermaker hall — Local 363.

BM-ST Rick Eller put together a team, at no cost to the museum, to get the job done. L-363 members cut out an exterior section of the deteriorated firebox plate where a damaged staybolt was located. Using both modern cutting and welding techniques and historical hammer peening methods, the members installed a new plate and staybolt. With museum representatives providing insight, the repairs were made with Local 363 providing the shop area, tools, and labor. PMC, a Boilermaker contractor, provided the materials, performed the quality control functions, and arranged for Arise Inc. (an inspection service company) to provide the state-required inspection so Jumbo could be operated in public.

Thanks to their efforts, Jumbo — a real piece of American history — is back in operation.

L-128’s Nadeau spends retirement volunteering

Couple travels to Mexico to teach children, maintain orphanage

Florence and Jean-Marie Nadeau, a retired member of Local 128 (Toronto, Ontario), are living part-time in Mazatlan, one of Mexico’s greatest vacation destinations. Their time, however, is not spent at an exotic resort, but in volunteer work at some of Mexico’s poorest regions.

From December through April each year, Jean-Marie, a retired mechanic, performs maintenance work on the Marsh Children’s Home, a former motel located in Acapulco that was donated by a caring couple to house 80 orphans ranging in age from 6 to 18 years.

His wife, Florence, a retired seamstress, spends her days teaching orphans how to sew clothing on seven sewing machines donated by her home church, the Port Elgin Missionary Church in Ontario. The children are able to clean their clothes by using two washing machines donated by members of Local 128.

For years, the Nadeaus have been helping to provide food, shelter, and clothing to people in need. They first worked as volunteers with Disaster Response Service. Based in Grand Rapids, Mich., DRS was founded by the Christian Reformed Church in North America. Working with DRS, the Nadeaus have helped clear debris, assess needs, and rebuild homes after natural disasters. Their DRS work has taken them to Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas.

In 2005, the Nadeaus were introduced to the Marsh Children’s Home. They decided to live part-time in nearby Mazatlan so they could devote part of their retirement to the orphanage. They also volunteer at the LaVina Church, providing food, water, shoes, and medical care to the poorest in the city.

While in Mexico, the Nadeaus host a number of couples in their home. Visitors join the Nadeaus several hours a day volunteering in the church’s ministries. They say the work is never hard and is very fulfilling. If you would like to help the Nadeaus, please contact them at jmfnadeau@yahoo.com.

Jean-Marie and Florence Nadeau are pictured with children wearing Local 128 hats and T-shirts at the Marsh Orphanage in Acapulco, Mexico.
Boilermaker son named top football player

Chris White chosen best collegiate player in Mississippi

THE BEST COLLEGE football player in the state of Mississippi last year has strong Boilermaker roots. Chris White is the son of the late Larry L. White, who belonged to Local Lodge 112 (Mobile, Ala.) until his death in 1999, and is also the grandson of retired L-112 member James B. White.

A 6-foot-4, 235-pound senior at Mississippi State, Chris played middle linebacker. He transferred to the school in 2009 from Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, where he was named a first team All-American. He twice earned Southeast Conference Defensive Player of the Year honors. Last December, a 46-member statewide media panel chose him over nine other candidates to receive the Conerly Trophy, given annually to the player deemed the top football player in the state of Mississippi.

“Chris White is a very proud of his grandson’s achievements,” said L-112 BM-ST Curtis Brooks, “as are the Boilermakers at Local Lodge 112. Chris is very deserving of these awards.”

Union Plus expands job loss grants

Furlough and strike assistance grants are also available

UNION PLUS HAS announced the expansion of job loss grants and the addition of two new hardship grants. The grants are available to qualifying members who hold a Union Plus credit card.

Previously, the $250 job loss grants were available to cardholders who applied for the benefit within six months of their last day on the job. Under the new policy, cardholders have up to 12 months after their job loss date to apply.

Cardholders must have been out of work for 90 days or longer to be eligible. According to Union Plus, the expansion will allow more members to become aware of the program and to apply for it. Since the program began, more than 900 Union Plus cardholders have received a total of $225,000 in grants.

In addition to expanding the job loss grants, Union Plus is making available grants for cardholders who are facing financial difficulties due to strikes and furloughs. Union members who are on strike or who have been locked out for 30 or more consecutive days may receive a $250 payment made directly to their Union Plus credit card account. The furlough grant helps union members or their spouses who have been furloughed from their jobs for 15 days or more within a six-month period with a one-time $250 payment to their Union Plus credit card account.

Union Plus credit card holders can also take advantage of skip pays, a layoff helpline, a member advocate, and disaster grants. Additional qualifications may apply for grant eligibility. Learn more and find grant applications at www.UnionPlus.org/UnionSAFE.

Union Plus programs are offered through Union Privilege, an organization created by the AFL-CIO in 1986 to offer consumer benefits to union members.

L-359 members donate to family of slain teen

Workers, mining contractor raise $5,100

WHEN NEWS THAT 15-year-old Loren Leslie was found slain in central British Columbia, near the town of Vanderhoof, last November, Boilermakers working at the nearby Endako Mine expansion project decided to do something for the girl’s family.

Local 359 (Vancouver) members Kerry Hughes and Chris Frazer spearheaded a collection at the work site, assisted by fellow members Leon McCrea and Gerald Bergstrom. Contributions from Boilermakers and from members of six other unions of the BC building trades working on the project generated $2,600. Lockerie & Hole Eastern, the contractor for the molybdenum mine expansion, agreed to match up to $2,500. On Dec. 11, the four Boilermakers behind the fund-raising effort delivered a $5,100 check to Loren Leslie’s grandmother, who happened to live just across the highway from the construction camp. A letter of condolence from the unions and the contractor was also presented.

A 20-year-old Fort St. James man has been charged with the girl’s murder. L-359 is a shop and construction lodge chartered in 1946.

ALERT! Railroad health plan seeks dependent Social Security numbers

MISSING INFORMATION COULD LEAD TO LOSS OF COVERAGE

RAILROAD MEMBER DEPENDENTS who do not have Social Security numbers (SSNs) and/or Medicare health insurance claim numbers (HICNs) on file with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services risk losing their coverage under the Railroad Employees National Health and Welfare Plan.

In June of 2010, United Healthcare began sending notices to railroad workers informing them about deadlines for reporting missing dependent information. The first deadline was July 31, 2010 for dependents who were added to the plan between Jan. 1, 2009, and May 31, 2010. The second deadline was Jan. 31, 2011 for dependents added to the plan before Jan. 1, 2009.

Danny Hamilton, Director of Railroad Division Services, said any member who is not sure if the appropriate dependent information is on file should immediately contact Railroad Enrollment Services at 1-800-753-2692.

Falling behind financially?

Union SAFE may be able to help.

If you’re having trouble making ends meet in this economy, Union SAFE may be able to help. We offer valuable benefits for members who participate in Union Plus programs including Union Plus Credit Card, Mortgage and Union Plus Insurance and who are facing economic hardship.

To find out how Union SAFE may be able to help, visit: UnionPlus.org/UnionSAFE
L-29’s Moffatt thanks Boilermakers

MY BIG BROTHER, Dave, got me started as a Boilermaker in 1975. At age 54, I could not continue in the trade [due to health reasons]. Just before Christmas, a couple of my friends from Local 29 took up a collection, and I received $4,072. I can’t explain how much it meant to me.

I would like to thank my brothers for a wonderful living and an exciting career. I have a whole lifetime of boiler-making memories. It wasn’t all easy — divorce, injuries, being away from home for long periods — but fortunately you don’t [focus on] the bad times.

I love all you guys and my trade as a journeymen field construction Boilermaker.

RUSSELL G. MOFFATT
Local 29 retiree
Medybemps, Maine

Retiree seeks contact with other members

AFTER COUNTLESS conversations with other construction Boilermakers, I realized that what many of us miss the most in retirement is contact with the friends we have made in the trade. Over the years, many of us “boomed out” to different jobs across the country and lost communication. If any fellow members — retired or active — are interested in finding a way to get back in touch with old friends and acquaintances, I’m interested in being in part of that effort. Please send me an email at mmlajon66@yahoo.com.

JON M. SHASKAN
Local 549 retiree
Charleston, S.C.

Wife of L-647’s Rathjen thanks Brotherhood

I RECEIVED WORDS of comfort and gifts of money from Boilermakers of many locals [upon the death of L-647 member Darrell “Shorty” Rathjen on Oct. 7, 2010]. I know you will keep his memory alive with stories [that involved him]. Be safe. Keep strong. Thank you.

BARB RATHJEN
Shorty’s wife
Hazen, N.D.

Letters to the editor

I AFTER Countless conversations with other members, I realized that what many of us miss the most in retirement is contact with the friends we have made in the trade. Over the years, many of us “boomed out” to different jobs across the country and lost communication. If any fellow members — retired or active — are interested in finding a way to get back in touch with old friends and acquaintances, I’m interested in being a part of that effort. Please send me an email at mmlajon66@yahoo.com.

JON M. SHASKAN
Local 549 retiree
Charleston, S.C.

Local news

Local 1-Chicago

JOHN SKERMONT, BM-ST of Local 1, Chicago, reports presentation of membership pins to the following:

50 YEARS robotic Daniel;
40 YEARS James Alton, Thomas Brennan, Benjamin Kosiek, Andrew Wayne Zane;
35 YEARS Thomas Barry, Daniel Favia, Dennis Finnegan, Robert Hughes, Andrew Reid, John Riel, Louis Truffa, Kevin Sheehan, James Ward Jr.; and
25 YEARS Cruz Garcia, James K. Maddox.

Local 7-Buffalo, N.Y.

JOSEPH BROWN, BM-ST of Local 7, Buffalo, N.Y., reports presentation of membership pins to the following:

55 YEARS robotc Morawski;
45 YEARS George Boice, Fred Carpenter, William P. Melski, Greg Poulin;
35 YEARS Joseph D. Brown, Rich Chmiel, Pat Lyons, John MAscio, Terry Rose, Patrick Walsh, Mike Witkowski;
30 YEARS Shawn Coon,Wayne Jones, William Riley, Garland Shisler, Dennis Smith, Robert Streiff, Don Weishaar Jr.; and
25 YEARS Tim Boice, Al Neighbors, Frank St. George.

Local 242 -Spokane, Wash.

MARK KEFFLER, BM-ST of Local 242, Spokane, Wash., reports presentation of membership pins to the following:

40 YEARS Gary Kimberly, Ray Riojas, George Shutt;
35 YEARS John J. Castaneda, Rick Charbonneau, Donald G. Fowler, Myron A. Frear, David E. Russell, John M. Schneider;
30 YEARS Michael G. Allen, Mark E. Bailey, Richard Broderdorp, Timothy K. Pringle, Tracy Reedon, Donald A. Rubelli, Robert A. Rumsey; Glenn G. Bender, Pat E. Burton, Ronald K. Hardy, Gary McCracken, J.D. Romaneschi, Roger G. Webb, Arthur L. Wing; and

Local 374 -Hammond, Ind.

PAUL MADAY, BM-ST of Local 374, Hammond, Ind., reports presentation of membership pins to the following:

30 YEARS Mickey Angotti, Rickey Angotti, Doug Arambula, Jebel Bey, Richard Brown, John Geyer, George Hillier, Joe Kasper, Pat Krieter, Terry Lukish, John Rankin, Michael Sereno;
25 YEARS Jerrell Clark;
20 YEARS Mark Peter, Penny Plowman; and
15 YEARS Arthur Brock, George Jones, Lance Jones.

Local 433 -Tampa, Fla.

JAMES BARNES JR., BM-ST of Local 433, Tampa, Fla., reports presentation of membership pins to the following:

40 YEARS John E. Parry, Kenneth D. Binnion; Larry E. Adam; John W. Belcher Jr., Herbert Cox Sr., Mitchel I. Dykes, Ralph E. Hunzeker, Robert E. Olsen Jr.; and
35 YEARS Thomas A. Dyer, Gerald L. Rabideaux, Paulson, Glen M. Peterson, Chon Martinez, Alvin A. Savela, Gary D. Stevenson, Larry Tiefenthaler;
25 YEARS Philip E. Beckman, Martin Y. Boyd, Clerence D. LaFontaine, Dayle P. Paulson, Glen M. Peterson, Chon Martinez, Alvin A. Savela, Gary D. Stevenson, Larry Tiefenthaler; and
15 YEARS Donald A. Rubelli, Joseph V. Ewell, Gary Lee Johnson, Jerry D. Showers, James K. Starlin, Dennis P. Vent, Jeffrey D. Voss.

Local 647 - Minneapolis

BERNARD (BARRY) HILLA, BM-ST of Local 647, Minneapolis, reports presentation of membership pins to the following:

55 YEARS Phillip R. Engler, Robert G. Peterson;
50 YEARS Richard G. Kurash, Robert L. Nesseim, Jack D. Tucke;
45 YEARS Robert E. Beckman, Martin Y. Boyd, Clerence D. LaFontaine, Dayle P. Paulson, Glen M. Peterson, Chon Martinez, Alvin A. Savela, Gary D. Stevenson, Larry Tiefenthaler;
35 YEARS Philip E. Beckman, Martin Y. Boyd, Clerence D. LaFontaine, Dayle P. Paulson, Glen M. Peterson, Chon Martinez, Alvin A. Savela, Gary D. Stevenson, Larry Tiefenthaler; and
30 YEARS Donald I. Exum, Philip E. Beckman, Martin Y. Boyd, Clerence D. LaFontaine, Dayle P. Paulson, Glen M. Peterson, Chon Martinez, Alvin A. Savela, Gary D. Stevenson, Larry Tiefenthaler; and
15 YEARS Wesley Konsor, Michael A. Lodermeer, Thomas J. McNamara Jr., Kory A. Olson, John D. Smith, Jackson W. Stahlberg, Gregory D. Staton, John R. Stecker, Gary G. Szczur, Randale White, Ferris A. Wiens; and
WITH DEEP SORROW, the International Brotherhood records the death of these members as reported to the International Secretary-Treasurer’s office and extends its heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved families.

In Memoriam

**THE DEATH BENEFIT PLAN**

Under the Boilermaker-Blacksmith National Pension Trust has paid the beneficiaries of the following deceased members who were covered by the plan since the last issue of our publication.

**IF YOU HAVE NOT YET been furnished this information, contact your local lodge, secure the beneficiary forms, complete the required information, and forward to the Administrative Office of the Pension Fund, 754 Minnesota Avenue, Suite 200, Kansas City, MO 64101, at the earliest possible date. NOTE: These additional death benefits can only be derived for members who worked under a collective bargaining agreement with an employer contributing to the Boilermaker-Blacksmith National Pension Trust.**

**DEATH BENEFITS**

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* Additional Death Benefits Paid
A MESSAGE TO OUR MEMBERS

GOP-backed budget cuts could strangle economy

Defunding government programs will cost jobs, threaten unions

FACED WITH a national debt that has grown to over $14 trillion over the past decade, Washington is debating how best to proceed with deficit reduction — and Republican-sponsored budget cuts are quickly spiraling out of control. The unfolding budget battles could have a dire impact on job growth and the nation’s continued economic recovery. Those battles will also define what kind of nation we leave our children and grandchildren.

Any approach to deficit reduction must be both sensible and fair. However, the current-year budget bill passed by House Republicans is far too extreme and would cause irreparable harm to our nation. Many Republican congressional members, especially those who owe allegiance to the tea party movement, want immediate, massive new cuts aimed at dismantling government functions — from enforcing labor laws, to protecting workers, to funding advances in clean coal and other emerging energy technologies. Deficit hawks are targeting dozens of federal departments and programs for defunding, including those that benefit working families and the poor.

For example, job-training programs would be slashed by $2 billion, community health centers $1.3 billion, and community policing $600 million. Even WIC, the program which provides supplementary nourishment to women and infants, would be cut by $758 million. Overall, Republicans hope to eliminate $61 billion from current funding levels in the remaining months of fiscal year 2011.

Many fear that reduced government funding will force federal agencies to eliminate jobs. State-run programs that depend on federal funding will also have to scale back, cutting even more jobs.

The unemployment rate could ratchet up quickly should hundreds of thousands of government workers suddenly begin looking for work. Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody Analytics, predicts GOP spending cuts would cause job losses of 700,000 through 2012. And rising unemployment would only strangle our fragile economic recovery.

Energy cutsbacks threaten Boilermaker work

OUR CONSTRUCTION SECTOR members will be among those adversely affected if Republicans push through their proposed cuts. Under the House GOP budget plan, $31 billion will be shaved from fossil energy research, $38 million from clean coal technology, and $169 million from nuclear energy. All of these areas are essential to America’s energy security and deserve full funding.

The future of coal in America depends on the successful deployment and development of carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology. We cannot afford to reduce our investment in this vital area and lose our competitive advantage to other countries.

We are also concerned about how proposed cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency will impact Boilermaker construction jobs. While the president has proposed cutting $1.3 billion from the agency in his 2012 budget, he would increase funding for compliance and enforcement, allowing the EPA to proceed with rules controlling greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from power plants, refineries, and factories. However, Republicans want to strip the EPA’s authority to regulate GHG and are calling for $3 billion cuts in the current fiscal year. These regulations are important for climate protection and would generate millions of man-hours of work to install pollution control equipment — work our members regularly perform.

Obama’s budget cuts too small, say Republicans

REPUBLICANS IN THE House not only seek major cuts for the rest of fiscal year 2011, but they have also come out strongly against President Obama’s budget request for next year. The GOP criticized the president’s proposed cuts as being too meager. But it’s not as if Obama’s recommended cuts are painless. His proposal freezes nonmilitary spending for five years, with no pay increases for federal employees. It also reduces spending on some social programs. Over the next decade, Obama’s budget would reduce deficits by more than $1 trillion.

Obama’s proposal also calls for investments in clean technology, education, research, and innovation — all designed to make the country more competitive.

The president’s FY 2012 budget request will likely not resemble the final product that comes out of the House and Senate budget committees. Months of difficult negotiations lie ahead. And a debate on the future of Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid is just beginning.

Richest two percent must share in the sacrifice

WHILE SOME REPUBLICANS appear eager to slash government programs that benefit middle class and low-income families, they were not so eager to push for sacrifices from the wealthiest two percent of America. Last December, the GOP delayed a Bush-era tax cut extension for the middle class until they were assured wealthy Americans would receive an extension as well.

In fact, tax cuts for the wealthy are a major contributor to the growing deficit. Writing for the Economic Policy Institute, Andrew Fieldhouse noted that, “making permanent the Bush-era income, estate, and gift tax provisions . . . and indexing the AMT [Alternative Minimum Tax] to inflation would add $4.6 trillion to deficits over the 2012-21 period.”

Fieldhouse stressed that the deficit has grown over the last decade largely because tax revenue was taken off the table without a corresponding reduction in spending.

It is too late to do anything about these tax cuts; they have been extended through 2012. But, Congress should take a long, hard look at rescinding them going forward.

If Republicans are truly interested in an equitable way to reduce the deficit — and they have so far illustrated that they are not — then wealthy Americans are going to have to shoulder the burden. That will likely mean that new tax revenue has to be on the table. Budget cuts alone won’t be sufficient. And deep cuts that lead to major job losses will only prolong our economic woes.

This is a dangerous time for unions

UNDERLYING THE Republicans’ budget-slashing mania is a dangerous seam of animus toward unions. Clearly, many in Congress and state governments see our nation’s fiscal problems as a political opportunity to weaken organized labor. The gains union members have made over years of negotiations have come under fire.

Even as the middle class continues to shrink, labor foes seek to undermine the living wages and hard-won benefits union workers enjoy — in a painful race to the economic bottom.

This battle is rapidly unfolding in our nation’s capital as well as in statehouses. We cannot afford to stand on the sidelines while the Republican-dominated U.S. House dismantles vital government programs created over generations and targets organized labor for destruction.

Union members, including Boilermakers, have begun to push back in growing numbers against the onslaught at the state level — notably in Wisconsin, Ohio, and Indiana. Rallies attended by tens of thousands of union workers and their supporters have focused the nation’s attention on the extreme antiunion agenda being promoted by many Republicans.

I strongly encourage all of our members to contact your state and federal elected representatives immediately and insist that the attacks on labor unions be stopped, that any budget cuts be reasonable, measured, and fair, and that wealthy Americans participate in the sacrifices that are being forced on the middle class and the poor.

NEWTON B. JONES
International President


VISIT OUR LEAP SITE AT HTTP://CAPWIZ.COM/BOILERMAKER/HOME TO TAKE ACTION TODAY.