

Partners **IN** PROGRESS

SMACNA & SMWIA—Building A Future Together FALL 2007



Local Partnership Success
You Can Do It Too!

HVAC
Industrial
Architectural
Metal

SMACNA



EXPERTISE

PERFORMANCE • TRAINING • STANDARDS

CONTENTS

NEWS AND SHORTS2

USE TOOLS FOR COOPERATION4

BRITISH COLUMBIA:
TAKING THE LEAD6

CROSSWORD PUZZLE8

PARTNERS IN PROGRESS
2008 CONFERENCE PROGRAM9

HVAC DATA BANK13

WHERE HAVE ALL THE
WORKERS GONE?14

MAKE A PROMISE A REALITY16

PARTNERS IN PROGRESS FALL 2007 VOL.6/NO.2

MICHAEL J. SULLIVAN
RON PALMERICK
Co-PUBLISHERS

KAARIN ENGELMANN
EDITOR@PINPMAGAZINE.ORG
EDITOR

PAUL ROSENBERG
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

DEBORAH APPEL-BARKER
CREATIVE SERVICES

©**BORIS LYUBNER**
STOCK ILLUSTRATION SOURCE
COVER ILLUSTRATION

PARTNERS IN PROGRESS IS A PUBLICATION
OF THE SHEET METAL INDUSTRY LABOR-
MANAGEMENT COOPERATION FUND.

ALL CONTENTS ©2007 BY THE SHEET METAL
INDUSTRY LABOR-MANAGEMENT COOPERATION FUND,
P.O. Box 221211, CHANTILLY, VA 20153-1211.

FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS AND ADDRESS CHANGES,
VISIT WWW.PINP.ORG.

CANADA PUBLICATIONS AGREEMENT No. 40725004

STATION A, PO Box 54
WINDSOR, ON, N9A 6J5



PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.



NEWS AND SHORTS

ITI's Merkel Named Best Instructor

Bernard J. Merkel, who has been director of HVAC Service Training for the International Training Institute (SMWIA-SMACNA) for the past six years, won first place in 2007's edition of the annual Best Instructor competition sponsored by the Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration Institute and *The Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration News*.

According to the Nov. 5 cover story in *The News* that named Merkel (and other winners): "Merkel is all over the country, teaching an average of six courses per term. His other duties include assisting school coordinators in setting up and developing service labs for their own facilities, plus training future service instructors."



Market Expansion Pep Talk

More than 3,000 apprentices from every building trade recently gathered in St. Louis to hear Labor speaker Mark Breslin. Breslin, who spreads the message of "Union Survival," is scheduled to speak at the Partners in Progress Conference in April 2008.

According to Breslin, just 20 years ago, organized labor had 87% of the national market. That figure has slipped to 13%. He challenged apprentices to assist the union's recovery by honing their Local's tradition of excellence in craftsmanship and safety. "The future of union construction work is at stake," Breslin says.

Even though local market share is higher, St. Louis business managers say they are committed to not just keeping market share but actively reclaiming what was lost. "Union pride is good, but delivering high quality is better," says Dave Zimmermann, Local 36 business manager.

"We are committed to increasing market share both through our traditional values of commitment to quality, productivity and safety excellence and our commitment to emerging markets, commissioning, green building and testing and balancing."

For more information about the 2008 Partners in Progress Conference, see pinp.org/conf08/. ■

NO PEEKING...YET

See Page 8



Your Opportunity: Huge Your Price: Free



**We're on board.
Are you?**

HVAC Expertise is the organized sheet metal industry's marketing slogan of the 21st century.

- ▶ **Customer-tested (focus groups & surveys)**
- ▶ **Professionally designed**
- ▶ **Available in four versions**
- ▶ **FREE!**

For SMWIA Local Unions • SMACNA Chapters • Signatory Contractors • JATCs

Use them for:

Helmet Stickers • Business Cards • Letterhead • Promotional Materials
Web Sites • Advertising • Signs • Brochures • Local Trade Shows • **ANYWHERE!**

Act Now!

See info about licensing the logos (required to protect our industry's copyright) at www.pinp.org. Download the licensing form there + get on board today!



Use Tools for Cooperation

Computer-facilitated discussions aid
Michigan's labor-management cooperation.



By Jim Pierzynski

Proper tools can do more than make a job site efficient and safe. They also help contractors and labor work together as partners on market expansion efforts.

That's why SMACNA contractors and SMWIA Local 7 representatives met recently in Michigan for a facilitated session using the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) Technology Assisted Group Solutions (TAGS) system.

Instead of traditional facilitation—where individuals verbally express their ideas in front of the group—TAGS separates ideas from their source. This allows ideas to be evaluated on merit, rather than on presentation or source. The system creates an atmosphere where participants feel uncensored and more free to contribute.

“We’re willing to try anything to increase market share.”

SMACNA and SMWIA representatives submitted questions prior to the meeting, which was sponsored by the Best Practices Market Expansion Task Force. Richard Barnes, formerly the director of FMCS, ran the session.

During the meeting, he posted the previously-submitted questions to an electronic flip chart displayed on each person's computer and on a large screen at the front of the room. Anyone who wanted to respond or contribute ideas could do it openly and anonymously by updating the electronic flipchart via easy-to-use software.

“This technology helped identify the degree of separation between the two sides and what needs to be done to work together as partners,” says Richard Cramer, Sr., of Dee Cramer, Inc. and immediate past president of SMACNA.

Dave Hall, business manager of Local 7, also found the meeting beneficial. “For both organizations, our biggest concern is to move forward and increase market share,” he says. “We just don't agree on how to do it.”

According to Cramer, agreeing on solutions begins with getting everyone in the same room at the same time. “This meeting started us off in the right direction,” he says.

Hall agrees. “I think this will help us to move forward. We're willing to try anything to increase market share.”

Contractors and the Local have agreed to follow-up on the progress made at this initial meeting by holding another facilitated session using TAGS. ■

Pierzynski is a Florida-based freelance writer and previously served on SMACNA's staff. For additional information on TAGS, see www.fmcs.gov. Click on “What We Do” and “eServices-TAGS”.

Richard Barnes: Facilitator

Richard Barnes, president of C. Richard Barnes and Associates, LLC., brought a wealth of experience to his role as facilitator for Michigan's SMACNA contractors and Local 7 representatives.

Before forming his own company in 2005, Barnes had a long career with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, where he served as its director from 1998-2002 after being appointed to that position by President Bill Clinton.

Barnes also has facilitated the CURT Tripartite Initiative, which includes construction industry leaders from organized labor (including SMWIA), national trade associations (including SMACNA), and the owner community of the Construction Users Roundtable.

Prior to his mediation career, Barnes was an international representative for the Laborers' International Union of North America, AFL-CIO in 35 separate industries.

More information about Barnes and his company can be found at www.crichard-barnes.com.



british columbia:

Taking The Lead

Contractors and Locals in British Columbia use education and communication to dramatically increase market share.

By Jim Pierzynski

Six years ago, signatory contractors controlled only 30% of the market in British Columbia. They now hold 90%!

What turned things around?

Bruce Sychuk, executive director of SMACNA-BC, attributes much of this success to the British Columbia Sheet Metal Partnership Committee's "Partnering Roadshow." The committee consists of SMACNA-BC and SMWIA Locals 276 and 280.

Goals of the roadshow when it was established six years ago were simple: (1) bring labor and management together in a non-threatening environment and (2) increase market share.

Does that mean mission accomplished?

Not at all! That's why the BC Sheet Metal Partnership is preparing to roll out its Roadshow II—with a little different look.

"Last time, the Union took an education role," says Jim Paquette, business manager of LU 280. "This time the emphasis will be on listening."

Sychuk agrees that listening is a vital aspect of the new roadshow. "We want to know what contractors and locals

need in the trenches. Since the business manager of the Local and the executive director of SMACNA are working together, we'll be able to address both management and labor issues on the spot."

"In addition, the roadshow will provide an update on partnership activities and let everyone know the partnership is alive and well," Sychuk says.

Roadshow II also will be different because sessions will be smaller and more individualized than the first time around. Instead of inviting several contractors to attend at a large venue, the Partnering Roadshow will visit individual contractors and even job sites.

"Contractors' needs have changed," Paquette says. "Unlike the first time around, we have contractors who work in specialized markets and who have particular needs.

"For example, what is required to keep their crews working? Do they need specific training? Do they need flexibility? What makes their lives better? Contractors who have a lot of





“We want to know what contractors and locals need in the trenches.”

non-union competition will use different approaches than contractors who have little,” Paquette adds.

Not only will the meetings be smaller, but also they will be less structured—without Powerpoint or other formal presentations. “We’ll be available, listen and field questions,” Sychuk says.

Even though union sheet metal market share has increased dramatically since the initial roadshow offering, both Sychuk and Paquette acknowledge that this latest endeavor remains important.

“Despite our success, we can’t sit back and relax,” says Paquette. “Just like the first time, whatever it takes, we’ll do.”

He adds that the Sheet Metal Partnership will use the information gained from this new roadshow to identify problems before they occur and to not only maintain market share gains, but even continue to increase market share.

How is that possible? “Work has not died down,” Paquette says. “It has actually increased.” Of course, that also means

Sign On The Line

One reason that SMACNA BC and Local Unions 276 and 280 can boast having 90% market share in some areas is the local union’s successful efforts to get sheet metal contractors to sign collective bargaining agreements.

Not only have the agreements been beneficial to the members of the SMACNA BC Partnership, but also they have helped signatory contractors.

One such contractor is Spectrum Sheet Metal Limited, a full service sheet metal contractor based in Richmond, BC.

Signing with Local 280 is a sort of homecoming for Spectrum owner Dan Mauro, who was a union sheet metal worker before he started his own business.

At the time—17 years ago—the business manager wasn’t interested in signing an agreement with what was essentially a one-person company. However, today Local 280 was happy to welcome Spectrum Sheet Metal Limited as a signatory contractor.

Mauro says he made the decision to sign because he wanted to make sure his employees were taken care of, including proper healthcare and pension benefits.

Approximately two years after signing the initial agreement, Spectrum Sheet Metal has seen benefits from being a member of SMACNA BC, including the technical standards and preferred access for questions related to the standards.

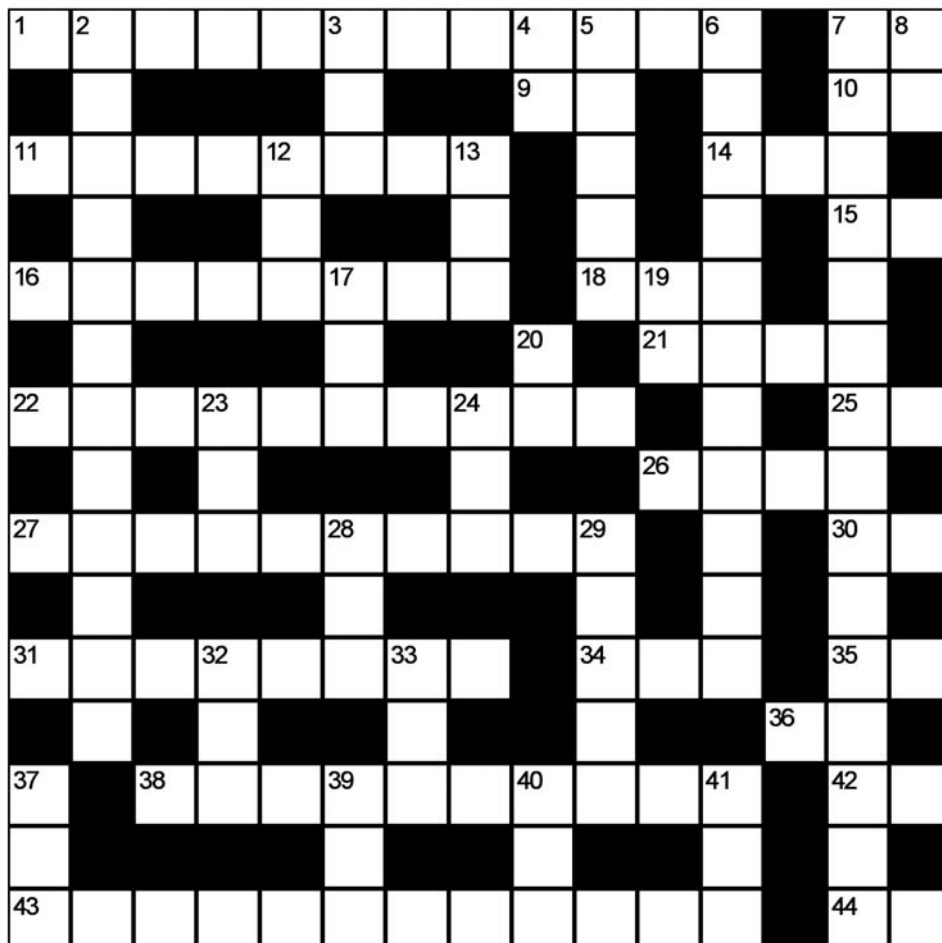
“As an owner, I’m proud to be a member of an association,” Mauro says. He believes his decision to become signatory to Local 280 and a member of SMACNA BC is a stepping stone to further business success!

that new contractors are starting up all the time, and the team will need to convince them to sign collective bargaining agreements.

Paquette and Sychuk are pleased to report that efforts in this area are paying off so far. Still, they want to keep existing members prosperous, which is why both are headed out on the road again. ■

Pierzynski is a Florida-based freelance writer and previously served on SMACNA’s staff.

SHEET METAL / HVAC CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

1. Part of most thermostats
7. Same as 4 down
9. Pressure, abbr.
10. Right-hand side, abbr.
11. Type of stainless steel
14. Prefix meaning "new"
15. Invisible blue light, abbr.
16. Caused by ice at the expansion valve
18. Four quarts, abbr.
21. Agreement
22. Most common control systems
25. Elevation, abbr.
26. Heat measurement
27. Refrigerant mixture

30. Symbol for Mercury
31. Part of an electric motor
34. A concern in system reliability
35. Essential computer software, abbr.
36. We get extra pay for it, abbr.
38. Adjusted and verified
42. Indirect vent, abbr.
43. Part of a heat pump
44. Gauge, abbr.

DOWN

2. Fights acids in refrigerant systems
3. Standards for electric motors
4. Total pressure, abbr.
5. Used to seal between parts
6. Type of compressor
7. Done when a problem arises
8. Measures acidity
12. Electrical symbols for current, voltage and impedance
13. Type of weld
17. Equivalent direct radiation, abbr.
19. Used to get business
20. Metric standard, abbr.
23. Company boss
24. Not to be done on-the-job!
28. Roof top unit, abbr.
29. Same as written table
32. Law impacting upon construction
33. Common structural member
37. Covers an end
39. What we don't want around valves
40. Atmosphere, abbr.
41. Road bosses, abbr.

Answers on page 2

PARTNERS in PROGRESS

2008

CONFERENCE

PROGRAM

April 3-5, 2008
Caesars Palace
Las Vegas



EXPERTISE

PERFORMANCE • TRAINING • STANDARDS



NEMI

FACE
challenges
CREATE
solutions

Save \$\$\$ – early bird registration
ends January 7, 2008!

2008 Partners in Progress Conference
Caesars Palace, Las Vegas • April 3-5, 2008

FACE challenges **CREATE** solutions

Join Mark Breslin in finding successful strategies for tackling your toughest issues. Mark believes labor and management have to step up and lead from where they are to transform the union construction industry and restore its competitive position in the marketplace. SMACNA and SMWIA hope your first priority will be to attend this conference.

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

NEW LEADERS SESSION FEATURING ROBERT WENDOVER

Attended by apprentice contestants as well as conference participants, a panel of contractors, business managers and industry leaders, led by Robert Wendover, will discuss how to inspire workforce leadership and instill a sense of purpose among the newest industry entrants. Young leaders speak their minds. Contractors and business managers reach out to future industry leaders.

SUCCESSION PLANNING—FINDING YOUR ALPHA TEAM—MARK BRESLIN

Finding the key people to lead your business in the future isn't easy. Find out how industry leaders have prepared new leadership and what is required for a successful transition.

REGIONAL BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Participate in valuable regional discussions where problems and solutions specific to your area are analyzed.

RECRUITING, RETAINING AND MOTIVATING YOUR WORKFORCE

Explore ideas and innovative recruitment methods that are being used to attract new people to the industry. Discover how to motivate the youngest generation of workers from renowned expert Robert Wendover and learn how to speak their language.

A COMPARISON OF UNION VS. NONUNION OPERATIONAL COSTS

Want to know why open shop contractors are successful? The findings of this candid, groundbreaking study will be discussed in depth by Jay Bowman of FMI Consultants. (A New Horizons Foundation Project)

PARTNERING TO IMPROVE WORKERS' COMPENSATION PRACTICES

Workers' Comp. can make you or break you. Discover the top ten things you can do to improve your workers' compensation experience. Learn what principles make successful workers' comp. systems work and how they can be adapted to where you live.

BIDDING GREEN—THE FUTURE OF CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTING

Green standards are becoming more prevalent in the industry. Find out how to get your share of this potentially lucrative market.

SCHEDULE COMPRESSION EFFECTS OF LABOR PRODUCTIVITY

Meet Dr. Awad Hanna of the University of Wisconsin—Madison and get the facts and recommendations on the impact of schedule compression on project performance. (A New Horizons Foundation Project)



Mark Breslin, is Chief Executive Officer of Breslin Strategies.



Robert Wendover is the Managing Director of the Center for Generational Studies.

SHARE IDEAS ■ LEARN FROM OTHERS ■ CONFRONT PROBLEMS ■ FIND SOLUTIONS
■ BOOST APPRENTICESHIP ■ PUBLIC RELATIONS ■ GAIN MARKET SHARE &

WHO

should attend?

Contractors

Chapter Executives

Decision Makers

Business Managers

Agent/Organizers

New or Future Owners
and Managers

JATC Training Coordinators

JATC Committee Members

SMACNA & SMWIA

Why You Need This Conference

Our joint goal is to shape the landscape of tomorrow's union sheet metal construction industry. The task isn't easy—and will require leadership, change, trust, dedication, and hard work. We can take advantage of the opportunities that are ahead of us, but only if we, together, remove our blinders and take a hard look at what the future may hold.

2008 Conference Schedule

Wednesday, April 2, 2008

REGISTRATION: 1:00 P.M.—5:00 P.M.

Thursday, April 3, 2008

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 8:00 A.M.—3:00 P.M.

- Succession Planning—Finding Your Alpha Team
- Bidding Green—The Future of Construction Contracting
- Partnering to Improve Workers' Compensation Practices
- Sheet Metal Safety Roundtable
- Communicating and Motivating Your Millennials
- Using Skill Certifications to Gain a Competitive Edge
- Model Specs—Using the New Format to Your Advantage
- New Apprentice Leaders Roundtable

EVENING: 5:30 P.M.—9:00 P.M.

Conference Opening Ceremony
Reception, Dinner and Awards

Friday, April 4, 2008

GENERAL SESSIONS: 8:30 A.M.—12:30 P.M.

- Mark Breslin—Alpha Dogs
- Best Practices to Expand Markets
- Recruiting, Retaining and Motivating Your Workforce—Featuring Robert Wendover
- New Horizons Study of Union vs. Non-union Costs

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 1:30 P.M.—3:00 P.M.

- Northeastern Regional Breakout
- Midwestern Regional Breakout
- South/Southwest Regional Breakout
- Western Regional Breakout

Saturday, April 5, 2008

GENERAL SESSIONS: 8:00 A.M.—1:00 P.M.

- Mark Breslin—Implementation Is Everything
- Schedule Compression Effects on Labor Productivity—Featuring Dr. Awad Hanna
- Prompt Pay Industry Initiatives
- Industrial Market Survey-Market Opportunities

NS ■ SKILLS IMPROVEMENT
JOBS; AND LOTS MORE!



2008 Partners in Progress Conference

Caesars Palace, Las Vegas • April 3-5, 2008

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

FACE CHALLENGES CREATE SOLUTIONS

Important: To ensure proper registration, PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY and complete the form in its entirety

NAME Last	First	NAME TO APPEAR ON BADGE	
ORGANIZATION NAME		POSITION	
MAILING ADDRESS			
CITY	STATE	ZIP	
PHONE	(PLEASE INCLUDE AREA CODE)	FAX	
E-MAIL ADDRESS			

	REGISTRATION FEES	Amount Due
Registration fee includes conference materials, daily continental breakfast, refreshment breaks, opening reception and dinner.		
Early Bird Conference Package @ \$625 (October 15, 2007—January 7, 2008)		
Conference Package @ \$695 (After January 7, 2008—Includes Admission to all sessions Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 1 Ticket to the Opening Reception and Dinner)		
_____ Additional Reception and Dinner Guests @ \$145 per person		
Thursday, April 3 Opening Reception and Dinner @ \$145 _____ # of Tickets		
TOTAL PAYMENT		

Check here if you have any ADA-related needs or dietary restrictions, please explain:

FOR MORE INFORMATION: 703.795.2411
SEND TO: Partners in Progress c/o TBA 121 N. Washington St., Su. 400-B, Alexandria, VA 22314
OR FAX TO: 540.301.0095 **OR REGISTER ONLINE:** www.pinp.org

METHOD OF PAYMENT VISA MasterCard American Express

Payment/Credit Card Number	Expiration Date	Name on Card	Authorized Signature
----------------------------	-----------------	--------------	----------------------

NOTE: TBA/LMCCF will appear as the Merchant name on credit card statement and credit cards will be processed upon receipt

HOTEL INFORMATION
Caesars Palace-Las Vegas, 3570 Las Vegas Blvd., South Las Vegas, NV 89109
 Contact Caesars directly at 800-634-6661 to make your reservation. It is important that you reference "Partners in Progress" when making your reservation in order to get the special conference rate. All reservation requests must be accompanied by a first night room deposit, plus tax. Reservations made by a major credit card will be billed immediately. Caesars allows individual attendees the right to cancel their guest room reservations without penalty up to 72 hours prior to scheduled arrival date. Cancellations received within 72 hours prior to arrival and "No Shows" will be charged one night's room and tax. Check-in time is 3:00 p.m. (Monday-Thursday) and 5:00 p.m. (Friday-Sunday). Checkout is 11:00 a.m.
CUT OFF DATE: Friday, February 29, 2008. Reservations made after February 29, 2008 will be accepted on a space and rate available basis.
SLEEPING ROOM RATE \$229.00 (plus room tax of 9%)

In order to best plan all event activities for all attendees, please fill out the following survey. All information is confidential:

AGE. Please check the appropriate box for your age:
 18-25 26-35 36-45
 46-55 56-65 Over 65

ARE YOU A...
 Contractor...Please answer the following questions.

What chapter do you belong to?

Is your chapter executive attending this meeting? Yes No Don't Know

List the local union(s) to which you are signatory.

Are your labor partner(s) attending this meeting? Yes No Don't Know

Chapter Executive...Please answer the following questions.

List the chapters to which you belong.

Is/are contractor member(s) attending this meeting? Yes No Don't Know

List the local union(s) to which you are signatory.

Are your labor partner(s) attending this meeting? Yes No Don't Know

Does your chapter have a local labor/management partnership program?
 Yes No Don't Know

Business Agents/Managers...Please answer the following questions

List your local union #

Are your management partner(s) or SMACNA Chapter Executive attending this meeting? Yes No Don't Know

Does your local union have local labor/management partnership?
 Yes No Don't Know

Please check the appropriate title below.

JATC Coordinator SMACNA Staff
 SMWIA Staff SMOHIT Staff
 Other (please list) _____

Nonresidential Construction Up 27%

Table One tells an amazing story. As measured by McGraw-Hill Construction (MHC), the value of new construction starts soared from \$252 billion in the year after the 1991 recession to \$682 billion in 2006. That's a 170% increase (not adjusted for inflation).

Keep in mind that MHC's numbers omit many building upgrades, rehabs, and modernizations—as well as virtually all maintenance work. (Compare the company's total for 2006—\$682.5 billion—with the U.S. Commerce Department's construction put-in-place total for that year—more than \$1 trillion.)

What makes Table One's numbers even more impressive:

- See the annual gains, including double-digit increases in 1998 and 1999.

- Up until lately, there was no drop-back. The 2000-2002 economic blip did not cause a decrease in construction industry start values.
- While the residential market's fall-off has caused a decline in 2007-2008 in total construction, the "hit" to the industry—when put in context with the early-2000s gains—does not seem as serious.

What's Happening Now

See Table Two for a look at MHC's predictions for 2008. A first reaction might be: "We're down nearly \$55 billion from 2005—that's, what, 8%."

But...wait.

Note that the residential component (the first two lines) swelled to an outsize

portion of the total—more than 57% in 2005. As the mainstream media have reported, that was the result of loose lending and other real estate practices that, one can hope, were one-time events.

So a reasonable reaction would be to put the 2005 figure in perspective: Thanks to swollen new housing construction, that figure was not realistic.

Further, the projection for housing construction in 2008 is for it to be \$254.2 billion. That's down almost \$130 billion.

What that means: Compared with 2005, the 2008 forecast calls for an increase in non-residential construction—from \$285 billion in 2005 to \$361.7 billion in 2008.

That's a 27% increase.

—Joe Salimando

Table One

Value Of U.S. Construction Starts

(in billions)

Year	Total	Change From Year Previous
1992	\$252.2	--
1993	\$271.5	+7.6%
1994	\$296.7	+9.3%
1995	\$306.5	+3.3%
1996	\$332.0	+8.3%
1997	\$362.4	+9.2%
1998	\$405.5	+11.9%
1999	\$448.0	+10.5%
2000	\$471.7	+5.3%
2001	\$496.4	+5.2%
2002	\$504.0	+1.5%
2003	\$531.9	+5.5%
2004	\$593.0	+11.5%
2005	\$668.9	+12.8%
2006	\$682.5	+2.0%
2007	\$626.7E	-8.9%
2008	\$614.3F	-2.0%

Source: McGraw-Hill Construction

Table Two

Construction Segments, 2005-2008

(dollars in billions)

(figures in italics provide percentage change from previous year)

Segment	2005A	2006A	2007E	2008F
Single-family housing	\$315.5 <i>+12%</i>	\$272.4 <i>-14%</i>	\$204.0 <i>-25%</i>	\$197.8 <i>-3%</i>
Multi-family housing	\$68.3 <i>+35%</i>	\$69.6 <i>+2%</i>	\$61.4 <i>-12%</i>	\$56.4 <i>-8%</i>
Commercial buildings	\$72.0 <i>+7%</i>	\$91.4 <i>+27%</i>	\$97.4 <i>+7%</i>	\$91.1 <i>-6%</i>
Institutional buildings	\$99.7 <i>+12%</i>	\$109.8 <i>+10%</i>	\$114.0 <i>+4%</i>	\$118.7 <i>+4%</i>
Manufacturing buildings	\$10.0 <i>+24%</i>	\$13.3 <i>+33%</i>	\$18.6 <i>+40%</i>	\$16.5 <i>-11%</i>
Public works	\$95.8 <i>+9%</i>	\$112.2 <i>+17%</i>	\$117.9 <i>+5%</i>	\$121.0 <i>+5%</i>
Electric utilities	\$7.8 <i>+6%</i>	\$13.8 <i>+78%</i>	\$13.4 <i>-3%</i>	\$12.7 <i>-5%</i>
TOTAL	\$668.9 <i>+13%</i>	\$682.5 <i>+2%</i>	\$626.7 <i>-8%</i>	\$614.1 <i>-2%</i>

Source: McGraw-Hill Construction. E = estimate, F = forecast



Where Have All The Workers Gone?

Remarkable recruiting success in Florida has demonstrated the power of a strong labor-management partnership.

By Kaarin Engelmann

With union marketshare at rock bottom in Florida, contractors have been reluctant to expand for fear they'll run short of skilled craftsmen.

"Most of the signatory shops here have expressed concerns about manpower," says SMWIA Region III Director Richard Compton. "Shortages created by the end of the baby boom generation will hit us hard."

In response, SMWIA Local 32 has joined with Florida SMACNA to sponsor a series of Industry Nights, where experienced, non-union sheet metal workers can interview with signatory contractors and accept offers on the spot.

"We modeled this after a successful program that the IBEW runs," Compton says. "For our first one, we estimated that about 70 people would show up at the hotel and, maybe, 20 of them would be qualified."

Instead, the Miami event pulled in more than 300 people, and another 100 attended the event in West Palm Beach. In the days following, contractors invited 150 craftsman to work.

"That was a whole lot more than we expected," says SMWIA Director of Organizing Mike Small (now retired), "and a majority came with sheet metal experience. You don't expect to see such a large turnout of people who already have jobs."

How can the union find such success in a state not known for its union ties?

"Some of these people don't have a clue this is a union partnership," says Mike Jeske, an SMWIA international organizer. "We aren't here with a sales pitch for the union. We focused on letting people know that we offer high paying jobs and that it would be possible to speak directly with contractors about existing job opportunities."



“Bury all your differences... Unfair competition is the adversary.”

Susan Karr, executive vice president of Florida SMACNA, asserts that making the program a team effort was critical. “People not familiar with how unions operate are more comfortable talking to employers.”

Initially some contractors were skeptical that the event would yield qualified craftsmen, but according to Compton, they had their eyes opened to the potential workforce.

“Shops here, for the most part, have far more capacity than they use. When they see that we can deliver a manpower source, contractors’ comfort level increases and they are willing to take on more work,” Compton adds.

Holding Industry Night events has a ripple effect, Jeske says. “Exposing workers to information about union pay and benefits puts pressure on open shop employers to raise the threshold, which levels the playing field for everyone.” ■

Engelmann is editor of *Partners in Progress*.

Sponsor Your Own Industry Nights

Any area that is concerned about manpower shortages may benefit from a program like Florida’s Industry Nights. To pull it off, though, it’s necessary to have a true partnership between labor and management, says SMWIA Region III Director Richard Compton.

“Bury all your differences,” he adds. “The Union and contractors should not consider each other adversaries. Unfair competition is the adversary.”

Compton, SMWIA Director of Organizing Mike Small (now retired), and Mike Jeske, an SMWIA international organizer, hatched the idea of Industry Nights after observing the IBEW’s success with a similar program.

“We sat down with the IBEW leadership to talk about their experiences, and then tweaked and revised the ideas,” Jeske says.

“I understand that, as a result of our success, the IBEW has now incorporated some of our ideas into their program,” Compton adds.

What does it take to bring Industry Nights home? Following are some tips:

Get contractors involved. Compton met with every union employer in Florida to brief them on the program. “We let them know that the SMWIA would pay all of the expenses. We just asked them to commit to take time out of their lives to attend.”

Plan to spend an entire week on site. In Florida, as many as 20 SMWIA organizers met to strategize on the Sunday before a Thursday-night event. They then spent the next 3-1/2 days on a recruiting blitz to drum up interest. Finally, they worked to make the evening a success.

Make the blitz count. Jeske and his crew handed out bilingual handbills and drove around in trucks festooned with banners proclaiming: “Sheet Metal Workers with experience—\$18.48 to \$34.20 an hour.”

“We blanketed construction sites all over the area,” says Compton. “When we ran out of construction sites, we hit manufacturing facilities, service trucks, fast-food joints, hardware stores, and any other place where we could find sheet metal workers.”

Follow-up. “Once word gets out there, it doesn’t go away,” Jeske says. “Phone calls keep coming in.” Tracking these calls and following up with applicants makes continued progress possible.

“There will be no magic wand to solve workforce issue, but every little bit helps,” adds Jeske.

“This new approach will be of value in many other areas,” concludes Jim White, new SMWIA director of organizing.

MEMBERMessage

Make A Promise A Reality

FREE copies of an important DVD are available to all Locals and members

Abraham Lincoln said: “Commitment is what transforms a promise into reality.” SMWIA President Michael J. Sullivan and former SMACNA President Keith Wilson express the same sentiments in the SMWIA/SMACNA Live Up To The Promise DVD.

“In this economy we cannot afford to lose work. We must have the companies that use our contractors beating a path to their doors because they know we can provide the best workforce to meet their requirements,” Sullivan says.

On the DVD, Sullivan and Wilson ask workers to be productive on the job, get to work on time, dress appropriately, have a good work attitude, and work cooperatively. “Talk is cheap and actions do speak louder than words,” Sullivan says.

“I do not believe that our request for a promise from every member to do his or her very best on the job is asking too much,” he adds.

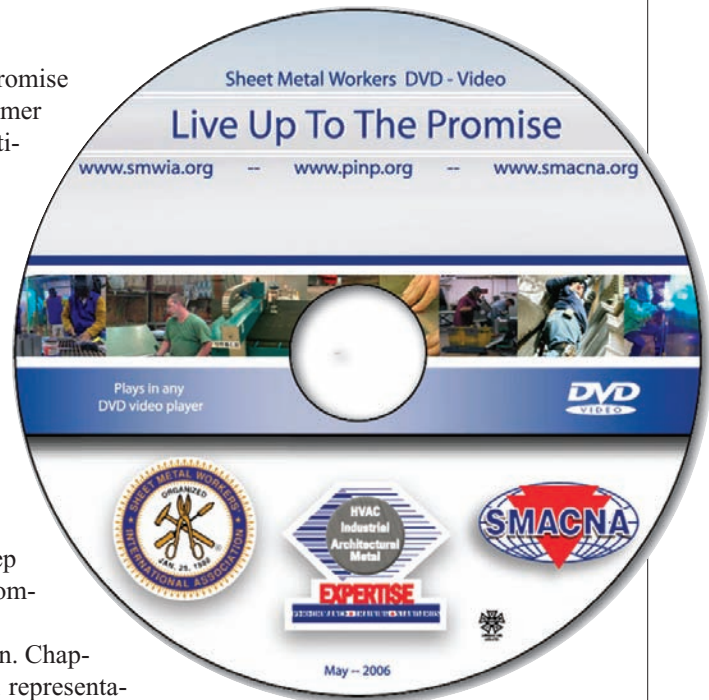
Success can only come when both management and labor keep their promises—and work together, says Wilson. The fruit of such commitment is market expansion.

More than 21,000 copies of the DVD are currently in circulation. Chapters, contractors, SMWIA business managers, agents, international representatives, organizers, and local JATCs can order additional FREE copies of the DVD on the Partners in Progress website at www.pinp.org/forms/index.cfm?fuseaction=laborDVD.

Locals in St. Louis, Los Angeles, New Mexico, and Northern Illinois have already ordered copies for all of their members.

“We have to be the best there is for sheet metal. This video gives us the insight—from our general president—to make that happen,” says Roy Ringwood, business manager/president of Local 105.

Local 36 Business Manager David Zimmerman agrees. “We need to get the message out to our membership.” ■



Partners **IN** PROGRESS

THE SHEET METAL INDUSTRY LABOR-
MANAGEMENT COOPERATION FUND
P.O. Box 221211
CHANTILLY, VA 20153-1211

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #354
Long Prairie, MN