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A Division of the WV State Building Trades, AFL-CIO | Bill Hutchinson, President | Dave Efaw, Secretary-Treasurer | Steve White, Director

## Prevailing Wage Facts Show Truth

# Big Savings Claim a Hoax

News reports about great savings to taxpayers on a project without prevailing wage have turned out to be untrue.

The project was an addition to the Potomack Intermediate School in Berkeley County.

The six classroom addition had been estimated to cost \$1,125,200 back in September of 2014 according to records found at the State School Building Authority.

The county had asked for, and received, a grant of \$1,000,000 from the state for the project.

When the bids came in on July 8 the low bidder, Minghini's was at \$986,000.

The high bidder was Lombardi Development at \$1,138,000.

But many mistakenly compared the con-

struction bid to the total estimate and then claimed savings. The mistake

was leaving out \$121,200 in what are called 'soft costs' such as architectural services, some geotechnical work, testing and balancing, clerk of the works, etc.

Also missed was an addition-

al \$39,440 set aside as contingency funds.

Total project costs were \$1,146,640, an amount greater than the \$1,125,200 estimate.

"The construction estimate was \$960,950 and was based on paying prevailing wage," said Dave Efaw, Secretary-Treasurer of the WV State Building Trades. "The bid came in at \$986,000, just about \$25,000 more than the estimate. There were no savings."

One news report about savings came after a comment by the Berkeley County Superintendent of

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**"The bid came in at \$986,000, just about \$25,000 more than the estimate."**

**Dave Efaw, Secretary-Treasurer**

*WV State Building Trades*

## Demonstrators Out Every Thursday

# County Commissions Back Local Workers and Contractors for Marcellus & Utica Jobs

County Commissions in the Upper Ohio Valley area are going on record in support of local workers and contractors.

The most recent county commission looking at the measure is Hancock which discussed the matter at an August 6 meeting.

"We had a good discussion with the Hancock Commissioners and expect them to put the resolution on an upcoming agenda," said Walter "Fuzz" LaRue, ACT Representative.

At issue is the desire to see jobs created by the Marcellus and Utica Shale gas discoveries to benefit the local economy as much as possible.

Brooke, Marshall, Ohio, and Wetzel County Commissions have all passed resolutions "To Support the Utilization of Local Contractors and Workers in the Construction of Pipe-

lines, Drilling, Processing and Related Facilities Associated with Marcel-

lus/Utica Shale."

Members of the Trades have been

pleased get the support.

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Hancock County Commissioners (from left) Jeff Davis, Joe Barnabei, and Michael Swartzmiller discuss the merits of local hiring with Hancock County resident and IBEW #246 member Adam Yeater at an August 6 County Commission meeting.

# PW Survey Underway, Results in October

Even though the new prevailing wage survey is under attack it is still underway. WorkForce is expected to complete the process by September 30.

Representatives from the trades predict the wage determinations to be lower than current wage rates based on the simple fact that a different math formula is being used.

However the good return rate from contractors, now over 40 percent, means the data is the most reliable available.

Current wages are calculated on a "majority rule" method which means if a rate is paid more than 50 percent of the time that rate becomes the established prevailing wage.

The new method uses a math average so even if the union rate is used a majority of the time the nonunion wage rates are averaged in resulting in lower rates.

"We expect some parts of the state to see significantly lower rates but

we also expect in areas where we do most of the work the rates to be much closer to what our contracts require," said Steve White, ACT Director.

According to White some interesting facts have already emerged.

Contractor participation in the survey has already exceeded that of past years.

A news report said that almost 2100 of the 5200 surveys sent out had been returned.

The high return rate should quiet critics who complained about low survey numbers in the past.

Republican leaders who argued against a new survey have pushed a survey already done by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

"The number of contractors participating in the BLS survey is around 200 each year, WorkForce is getting ten times that many," said White. "The new survey is better data because even BLS says their data is wrong for prevailing wage purposes

because it includes residential rates, has no fringe benefits, and many other reasons."

Republican leaders now say they don't want fringe benefits like pension and health care to be counted.

However that question was specifically asked by Senate Minority Leader Jeff Kessler (D-Marshall) when the bill was on its final vote in the State Senate.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch

Carmichael (R-Jackson) answered that pension and health care numbers were to be included in the calculations.

"We had a deal to let the experts decide the best wage calculation method but House and Senate leaders are now going back on their word," said White. "They simply want low wages and no benefits even if that means no savings for taxpayers and lost jobs for our contractors." ■

## Local Jobs

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"We have been frustrated by the many jobs our members have lost from companies importing workers," said Kyle Brown, newly elected President of the Upper Ohio Valley Building Trades Council and Business Manager for IBEW Local 246 in Steubenville.

That frustration has led area workers to stage roadside demonstrations at various locations every Thursday for the past two months. The theme is "Demand Local Jobs for Local Workers" where dozens and at times hundreds of workers line the streets holding signs for the public. ■

# UA Local 486 Accepting Applications for WV Apprenticeship

UA Local 486 Plumbers & Steamfitters Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee will be accepting applications for their Martinsburg, WV apprenticeship. Applications will be accepted through August 31, 2015.

The five year program teaches pipefitting, plumbing, welding, and HVACR skills both on-the-job and in a classroom setting. Starting pay is \$14.74 plus benefits.

Applications can be submitted at Borlie Mechanical, 5521 Tabler Station Road, Inwood, WV 25428 (see Robert Parker), Monday through Friday from 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM. There is a \$ 75.00 non-refundable processing fee, payable by money order only, due at time of application.

If you would like an application mailed or have any questions,

please call 410-866-5313 and press "0" for the operator. Our website is [www.486school.com](http://www.486school.com).

Applicants must have a high school diploma or equivalent, a valid driver's license, and be eligible to work in the US. Applicants must be able to obtain a Maryland Plumber and HVAC apprentice license, and WV Plumber-in-Training license. A drivers license or valid government issued ID is required at time of application. Applicants should live in Allegany, Washington, or Frederick Counties in MD or Berkeley, Jefferson or Morgan Counties in WV.

A math test, as well as a physical and drug screening will be required.

No applicant shall be rejected because of race, creed, color, sex or national origin. ■

## Governor Promotes Apprenticeship



Governor Earl Ray Tomblin tries his hand at bricklaying as Bricklayers District Council training coordinator Brian Greynolds looks on. Governor Tomblin dropped in during the Bricklayers apprenticeship recruitment effort to help bring attention to the benefits of skills training.

The mid-July event took place in Charleston across from a local WorkForce office where the Bricklayers apprenticeship program had set up to promote their apprenticeship program.

"We were very happy to have the Governor show up, and the press that came with him, to bring attention to the great opportunity apprenticeship programs like ours provide," said Steve Ruble, a representative of the Bricklayers District Council.

# Charges Filed Against Bilfinger-Westcon Project Manager Who Threatened Agent

A project manager for the construction company Bilfinger-Westcon threatened an Operating Engineers 132 Business Agent not once but twice.

According to Eran Molz, Business Agent for Local 132, on July 15 he stopped by the MarkWest gas processing facility being built at Mobley, WV in Wetzel County. A number of contractors are working at the site, both union and nonunion.

When Molz went to nonunion Bilfinger-Westcon's onsite office the Project Manager, A.C. Miller, not

only threatened to attack Molz if he didn't leave the job site, he also called Molz the following week and told him he knew where Molz lived and would take some sort of action if Molz did not 'back off'.

At issue is a member of the Operating Engineers from out of the area working for Bilfinger-Westcon. Molz had been trying to inform him he was in violation of his union commitment by working nonunion.

Apparently Miller was upset when he heard the Operator was leaving to return to Kentucky. That is when he

called Molz.

With the threats escalating the West Virginia State Police were contacted as well as a representative for the contractor at their U.S. headquarters in Bismarck, North Dakota.

The National Labor Relations Board has also been contacted and is investigating an unfair labor practice complaint filed by Local 132.

A related issue included in the unfair labor practice complaint is the termination of an Operating Engineer member by a different contractor working at the same site. The contractor wrote a letter stating the

project owner, MarkWest, demanded the person be removed from the site.

Local 132 believes the termination is related to the Bilfinger-Westcon incident. "We stand behind our members and agents, they are doing their job every day," said Chuck Parker, Business Manager for Local 132. "We are asking the National Labor Relation Board to intervene and protect our rights."

Bilfinger-Westcon is part of the international construction giant Bilfinger based in Germany. They describe themselves as an international engineering and services group. ■

## WV Laborers Offer Apprenticeship Opportunities

The West Virginia Construction Craft Laborers' Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee accept applications year round.

Those interested can apply at any WorkForce WV Employment Services Office.

Applicants must be at least 18 years old; have a high school diploma, GED or pass a test administered by WorkForce (if you are to test check times with WorkForce); have a valid driver's license; and be physically able to perform the work of the trade.

A substance abuse test will be required at some point in the process.

Documents such as a copy of a birth certificate, a valid driver's license, transcripts of grades and proof of a high school degree or GED will be requested at a later date.

The apprenticeship program consists of a combination of on-the-job training and hands-on classroom training.

The WV Laborers' Training Center in Mineral Wells provides 408 hours of classroom and hands-on training free of charge including

meals and lodging.

Apprentices will also learn on the job in their home areas while earning a paycheck, for a total of 4000 hours, approximately two years.

Upon completion of the program apprentices will have earned Journeyman status and receive a certificate from the U.S. Department of Labor.

The areas of training provide a wide variety of skills to ensure highly productive workers will have successful careers.

Topics include pipelaying, mason tending, instrument reading, environmental remediation and much more.

The recruitment, selection, employment and training of apprentices shall be without discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin or sex.

For more information visit their web site [www.wvcccl.org](http://www.wvcccl.org) or to receive a free brochure send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: West Virginia Laborers' Training Center, P.O. Box 6, Mineral Wells, WV 26150. ■

## Plumbers & Pipefitters 625 Apprenticeship Program featured in Public Affairs TV Show



Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 625 apprenticeship coordinator Brett Matthews (center) is being interviewed by (from left) State Senator Ron Miller (D-Greenbrier) and Sen. Bill Laird (D-Fayette) at Local 625's training facility in Charleston.

The program was featured on a new public affairs TV show called the Capitol Report and hosted by the two senators. The show aired in July but can be seen online at [wvcapitolreport.com](http://wvcapitolreport.com). Just click on the previous episodes tab and find the 07.07.15 show.

The 06.23.15 show talked about the importance of prevailing wage for a healthy economy.

Suddenlink subscribers can see the show on the Network WV channel, Tuesdays at 6:30 pm, repeated Sunday @ 6:30pm.

## 22nd Year of Charitable Giving

# Kanawha Valley Labor - Management Group Raises \$8,000 for HospiceCare

The Kanawha Valley Construction Labor Management Council raised \$8,000 at their annual golf outing held in mid-July.

The funds were contributed to HospiceCare, a local nonprofit group that serves 15 counties in West Virginia and provides compassionate medical, emotional and spiritual care for terminally ill individuals and their families.

The labor management group has been holding an annual charitable event for 22 years; the last 11 have been for HospiceCare.

"We feel they provide a much needed service to the community," said Jim Cerra, Executive Director of the Kanawha Valley Builders Association. "When the need is great they do excellent work."

According to Paul Breedlove, Business Manager of the Charleston Building Trades Council this year the event raised even more than usually thanks to a \$1000 contribution from Glenn Jeffries, President of Cornerstone Construction and \$3000 from Henry Neal of the Laborers and Scott Brewer of the Carpenters.

Neal and Brewer had recently received a settlement from an incident last year at a construction project for a local car dealer.

One of the car dealers' managers had threatened workers at a nearby protest.

The two turned all the proceeds

over to Hospice.

"We were manning a banner and this guy attacked us," said Neal. "We ended up with a settlement but never wanted money in the deal so giving it to Hospice along with the other folks seemed like a good deal to me and Scott." ■



Larry Robinson (center right) of HospiceCare receives check for \$8,000 from Jim Cerra. Also present are (from left) Scott Brewer, Carpenters; Glenn Jeffries, Cornerstone Interiors; Paul Breedlove; and Henry Neal, Laborers.

## Big Savings Hoax

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Schools Manny Arvon at a school board meeting.

Arvon said a contractor had told him \$200,000 to \$300,000 was saved but Arvon stated he had no way to verify the numbers.

"One newspaper just did bad math and concluded the project came in \$139,000 under budget but they did not account for the \$121,000 of soft costs, the contingency funds or some changed budget items," said Efav.

According to Efav industry ex-

perts say around 30 percent of a school project is labor.

So getting \$300,000 savings from a million dollar project is impossible and would require free labor.

The project estimates were based on square foot costs on similar projects in the area. Those costs included paying prevailing wage.

"It is clear there are no savings and no prevailing wages required," said Efav. "What we don't know is what the workers will be paid." ■

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