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SHORT CUTS

See endorsements
this issue on Page 4

Michigan voters will go to the polls to vote in the state-wide General Election on Tuesday, Nov. 5, but absentee ballots have already arrived in mailboxes around the state.

A list of candidates endorsed by the Michigan Building and Construction Trades Council and its affiliated councils appears in this issue on Page 4.

Union members are urged to research, support and vote for candidates who share the goals of organized labor.

CEO pay takes a dip, but they'll be OK

America's CEO's took an economic haircut last year.

The Economic Policy Institute reported in September that realized CEO compensation declined by 19.4 percent from 2022 to 2023. "CEO pay dipped in 2023 but remains enormous compared with the pay of other workers," the EPI said.

Don't worry, they'll be fine: in 2023, CEOs were paid 290 times as much as a typical worker – in contrast to 1965, when they were paid 21 times as much as a typical worker.

And adjusting for inflation, realized compensation (including stock benefits) of the top CEOs shot up 1,085 percent from 1978 to 2023, compared with the inflation-adjusted 24 percent growth in a typical worker's annual compensation.

"CEO compensation does not appear to reflect the greater productivity of executives, but their ability to extract concessions from corporate boards – thanks to dysfunctional systems of corporate governance in the United States," the EPI report said.

Union election petitions jump 29%

More U.S. workers appear to be turning to unions in hopes of improving their jobs.

On Oct. 22, federal officials reported a 29 percent jump in union election petitions during the most recent fiscal year, rising from 2,593 in 2023 to 3,286 in 2024. The increase is part of a years-long trend at the National Labor Relations Board, the agency that oversees private sector union elections and enforces collective bargaining rights.

The NLRB said the number of petitions it has received has more than doubled since 2021, when the board was reshaped with a union-friendly majority following President Joe Biden's victory over former President Donald Trump.

Workers can file election requests once at least 30 percent of the workplace has signed union authorization cards. Employers can also request that a vote be held if a majority of workers make it clear they want to unionize.

Jennifer Abruzzo, the labor board's general counsel, said in a statement that the uptick was a testament to workers "knowing and exercising their rights" and to the work of the board's staff.

President Biden has pressed, unsuccessfully, to get more funding for the NLRB. (From Portside)

Quotable

"There's a direct correlation between the ballot box and the bread box, and what the union fights for and wins at the bargaining table can be taken away in the legislative halls."

—Walter Reuther, UAW president, (1907-1970)

VICE PRESIDENT Kamala Harris makes her case for president during an Oct. 18 visit to a Lansing UAW hall. She has been endorsed for U.S. president in the Nov. 5 General Election by all 14 building trades international unions, as well as nearly the entirety of organized labor in the nation.



Biden-Harris 'delivered things we never asked for'

Member to member, union volunteers get out the vote

By Marty Mulcahy
Editor

In organized labor, the get-out-the-vote effort in Michigan and other swing states leading up to the Nov. 5 General Election has been in full swing since August.

Much of the impetus, funding and organization have come from international unions, who have devoted all manner of resources to swing states like Michigan in get out the vote efforts on behalf of labor-friendly candidates.

North America's Building Trades Union President Sean McGarvey, in a "Michigan Building Trades Campaign Kickoff" event on July 31 in Ann Arbor, exhorted hundreds of assembled building trades union leaders to "hit those jobsites and talk to those members. Don't argue with them, just give them the facts. Our members are professional, they're smart. Tell them this is what's

been done for them. This is what could be done for them in the next four years."

Among those facts, he added: "The Biden Harris Administration has our back. As soon as they

were elected, they immediately called us in during the transition and asked us for every wish we had for our members and their families. And I can tell you they

(Continued on Page 3)



"WE'RE DOING WHAT we do every year at election time, we're educating our members on supporting candidates who support us, and then urging them to vote," said IBEW Local 58 Registrar Jeannette Bradshaw, who coordinates the Detroit union's get-out-the-vote efforts. "We knock on members' doors, we phone bank, we visit jobsites. We call it a 'member to member' effort. We're working to let our members know which candidates support organized labor's issues, and why that's important to them." Union members who volunteered are shown here on Saturday, Oct. 12 at IBEW Local 58, assembling signs for the Harris-Walz campaign. Photo credit: Mark Baker



VOLUNTEERS FROM the building trades and other corners of organized labor are meeting and walking West Michigan neighborhoods twice a week this election season, in "flying squads" to knock on doors and drop campaign literature, in the effort to promote union-friendly candidates. State Rep. John Fitzgerald (D-83rd District) and Carol Glanville (D-84th District) are labor-friendly candidates who received some of that support on Oct. 10, with union volunteers meeting, above, at a UAW hall in Wyoming. "There's so much at stake this election," said West Michigan Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Local 174 Business Manager Ryan Bennett, "and things are so close, that just a handful of votes could make the difference in an election. That's why we're trying to leave no stone unturned to help candidates who support us."



THE INTERNATIONAL UNION of Painters and Allied Trades this month have been undertaking a swing state bus tour, and it stopped in Michigan on Oct. 17. IUPAT General President Jimmy Williams and General VPs Liz McElroy and Charlie Meadows visited several jobsites to "hear what issues matter to them and talk about the upcoming election." Among the sites they visited, above, was the 150 Bagley Street project in Detroit, meeting with members of Glaziers and Glassworkers Local 357. Photo credit: IUPAT

Still-strong construction industry takes a breather

After a red-hot year of construction activity in Michigan, industry employment cooled a bit in September. But little has changed for the long-term prospects of the industry in Michigan and around the nation.

Michigan construction employment dropped 1,600 jobs from August to September (-0.6 percent), making our state one

of only 10 in the nation to lose construction jobs for the month. But 2024 has been so strong for employment, that even with that drop, Michigan still enjoyed a 6.6 percent rise in construction employment over the previous 12 months (+12,600 jobs), with the job increase ranking our state No. 4 in the nation during that time. The numbers come from a

AFL-CIO's Shuler: Union workers have election super powers

Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin are the three uber-important swing states in Election 2024 – if Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris wins all three states, she is a virtual lock to win the presidency.

With Harris endorsed by virtually the entire labor movement, international, statewide and local unions have been very active this election season, educating members on the importance of electing union-friendly candidates up and down the ballot.

The closeness of this year's election between both Donald Trump and Harris, and those in key down-ballot races like those for state representative, make this year's union-backed get-out-the-vote efforts more important than ever. Here AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler shares some thoughts on the importance of making union member-to-member communication prior to the Nov. 5 election:



By Liz Shuler
AFL-CIO President

The AFL-CIO represents nearly 13 million workers in our federation across 60 unions. Last year, we started a conversation about how workers are doing in this country. Some of these numbers may surprise you: 70 percent of Americans support unions, among young people under the age of 30, it's nine in 10.

Union workers are continuing to find their power in two very distinct ways.

First: We are the ones who are going to decide this presidential election. In swing states like Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Nevada that are going to come down to 1 percent or 2 percent, union voters are 20 percent of the electorate. That's one in every five voters.

And second: Our workers are powerful because they have something that is so rare today – the trust of those around them. Union members are credible political messengers. They can

"With organized labor, you have a movement that can actually deliver voters – and win an election."

connect with each other and with the people in their communities in a way no one else can.

Having the hard conversations. Many of us have felt like it's hard to just have a conversation about politics with someone we disagree with. Or we've talked to someone who has figured out what team we play for, and then just tuned us out. Or – let's admit it – maybe we've done it to someone else.

Yet in a room full of union members, that's not how it plays out. When you ask a union member who their most trusted source in the world is on politics, it's not their friends, family or loved ones. It's their fellow union members.

It's not hard to see why union (Continued on Page 3)

Sunday school for apprentices, anyone? Project 2025 seeks religious-involved training

Veronica Goodman
Center for American Progress

This article is part of a series exposing how the sweeping Project 2025 policy agenda would harm all Americans. This new authoritarian playbook, published by the conservative Heritage Foundation and seen as a playbook for another Donald Trump administration.

Among the targets: the union construction apprenticeship model, which was nearly privatized and blown up during the Trump administration. Traditional apprenticeship programs were saved by intense lobbying by building trades unions – but would be back under the chopping block if Trump were re-elected.

For nearly a century, the

Project 2025 (Page 616) urges 'expanding available apprenticeship programs including by encouraging the role of religious organizations in apprenticeships....'

federal registered apprenticeship system has been transformative for millions of apprentices as a pathway to the middle class.

Despite strong evidence that registered apprenticeships provide workers with higher-than-average wages and pathways to good jobs, the far-right authoritarian playbook known as Project 2025 proposes creating a lower-quality parallel program.

This would be a fundamental attack on existing, successful registered apprenticeship programs, eliminating the incentives for employers to partner with workers on high-quality training.

Specifically, Project 2025 seeks to revive a failed Trump administration proposal called the Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Program (IRAP), which was quickly reversed by the U.S. Department of Labor in 2021 after

Bureau of Labor Statistics report released Oct. 22.

"It is great that four out of five states have added construction jobs over the past year," said Ken Simonson, the Associated General Contractors chief economist. "Even more states would be seeing gains if there were enough qualified workers available to fill (Continued on Page 3)

Union-crafted art work an homage to unity, industry

By Marty Mulcahy, Editor

MUSKEGON – When you're in town, keep a lookout for The Portal, a union-built public work of art composed of a 45-foot circle of Corten Steel.

The Portal was erected on a rise in the landscape between Shoreline Drive and the Shoreline Inn, and is lit by a series of lights in the middle of its ring from dusk to dawn. The sculpture, dedicated on Sept. 9, pays homage to the site's industrial heritage and "also represents the circle, emblematic since ancient times and representing powerful symbols such as the sun, unity, strength, and unbroken love," says its sponsor, the Muskegon City Public Art Initiative.

Created by Muskegon artist Lee S. Brown, the sculpture was built by Versatile Fabrication in Muskegon Heights, a Sheet Metal Workers Local

7-affiliated contractor. The project foreman was Art DeYoung.

"The biggest challenge was knowing that it was such a big, public project," DeYoung said. "And with all the donations that went into it, and all the people who will see it, I wanted to make sure it was perfect." He added: "It turned out pretty sweet."

Artist Brown told the Muskegon Public Art Initiative that his inspiration for the work "is the people of Muskegon who have always had big (Continued on Page 2)

A 45-FOOT RING of steel, "The Portal" is a prominent piece of art in Muskegon. It was built by Sheet Metal Workers Local 7 members at Versatile Fabrication.

Photo credit: City of Muskegon



Viewpoints



Dual perspectives

To the Editor,

Dear loyal Trumpies – the truth will set you free!
If you are 50 years or older, there hasn't been a day in your life that Trump has not been in court for his shady dealings. He has been filing bankruptcy on his failed business ventures, and worst of all is the constant stream of lies that come out of his mouth every time he speaks.

If you are over 50 then you should realize that Trump is following the Hitler plan to become king of the U.S.: discredit the press and stir up hate for anyone who doesn't follow his lead. But the real crime is that he wants his Republican flunkies to strip women of the ability to decide for themselves what happens in their lives.

You should worry about your children and your grandchildren, who Trump says he will put in prison if they don't agree with him. They will have to live under his laws and have cases determined by his judges. He plans to release his criminals back to the streets to carry out his plan to be king!

Trump has you convinced that anyone who doesn't agree with him is an enemy of the state.

If you agree with Trump that Putin is a great person, then you can join "The Donald" on his pleasure cruise to Russia. And when you get there you can call us (maybe) and tell us how happy you are with your decision.

Until Trump disappears, sane Republicans and sane Democrats won't be able to work together to solve our problems and save our democracy!

I'm retired UA (proud to be union for 50 years), an Army vet and a grandfather of a three-year old. I hope Trump doesn't put him in prison.

The only thing Trump knows about the Constitution is that he wants to change it. All hail the king!

Gary Armstrong
Potterville, Mich.

...

To the Editor,

I was shocked and dismayed to find out my union had endorsed Harris for president. Apparently you've had your head in the sand for the past four years.

How can you not notice the skyrocketing costs of living, crime, and our fall from position with other world powers? The National Socialists trying to ruin our country with the open borders, allowing illegal scabs to take our jobs, education, health care, and room and board at our expense! How can you really believe they benefit our country at all? Have you forgotten the skilled trades jobs lost when Joe killed the pipeline?

And when the rank-and-file members of the Teamsters back the other guy and the union leadership decides to remain neutral, it makes me wonder what side our brothers and sisters are on? Are they really looking out for us or themselves?

And when the National Socialists try to take our guns, do anything to stop the opposition, let their cities burn and call it peaceful demonstrating, and persecute the Jews, it kinda sounds like Germany back in the 1930s, don't it?

Please make the right choice when you vote. Our country depends on it.

Scott Rydman
Coleman, Mich.

The Building Tradesman welcomes your letters to the editor.

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Art work an homage to unity, industry

(Continued from Page 1)

aspirations, as can be seen not only in its history but also in the resurgence of its beloved city in the last 15 years." It is the energy and grit of Muskegon citizens that is spurring this new and exciting growth, he said.

The ring is made of Corten Steel (sometimes known as weathered steel), a registered trademark of U.S. Steel. It's a material that's often used in outdoor construction. It will develop a rusted patina on its surface and doesn't need to be painted.

DeYoung said the steel pieces came into the shop straight, and the art work's four sections were hand-formed, bent into their arched shape using chain falls in the Versatile Fabrication shop. He said the entire 25,000-lb. structure is hollow, just like the Gateway Arch in St. Louis. The ring was anchored into a concrete pad using 14 one-inch anchor bolts.

The Muskegon City Public Art Initiative, a project of the Community Foundation for Muskegon County, said that The Portal is its eighth project. The group was established in 2018 to develop 10 "monumental" works of art in the city. The City of Muskegon is exploring the possibility of expanding the bike/pedestrian pathway to include a hard-surface

trail up to and through the sculpture.

This sculpture has a geographic connection to Muskegon's industrial heritage. In 1911, a new company – Sealed Power

– was established in Muskegon to build piston rings for Continental Motors, also of Muskegon. Sealed Power developed into one of Muskegon's most iconic industrial companies, and its only

Fortune 500 company, employing more than 1,500 workers at its peak and producing millions of piston rings annually. Eventually Sealed Power changed its name to SPX. The Portal is located on property in front of the former SPX headquarters and near the company's first plant.

Joining DeYoung for the bulk of the eight-month project was first-year apprentice Adam Meyers. They were joined at the end of the project by Tom Mackey and Wyatt Short. Versatile Fabrication project managers Rodney Robinson and Scott Mackey also worked on The Portal.

"It turned out great, it's one of the more public projects that I have been a part of," DeYoung said. "I look at it as something that I did that will be there, who knows, maybe a couple hundred years?"



"THE PORTAL" is pieced together in Muskegon by Sheet Metal Workers Local 7 members employed by Versatile Fabrication.

Photo credit: Art DeYoung

Just joking

Two Mafia hitmen are walking through a deep forest in the middle of the night. One of them turns to the other, and says, "I have to admit, it's pretty scary out here!"

The other replies, "You think this is bad? I have to walk back alone!"



...
My son and I were driving down the interstate yesterday and we saw what looked like a drum from an old cement mixer sitting in a field.

I said, "look, a cement truck drum!"

He said, "are you sure?"

I said, "yes, there's concrete evidence in that field!"

...
I was working in my garden this morning and my neighbor looked over the fence and asked what I was doing.

I told her I was arranging my plants in alphabetical order.

"Really, how do you find the time?" she asked.

"It's next to the sage," I replied.

Perverse incentive for proposed Kroger merger

By Jim Hightower

Sadism and masochism (abbreviated as S&M) are generally frowned on in polite society as perverse acts of sexual gratification. But what should we make of M&As?



This is Wall Street's abbreviation of mergers and acquisitions, which are acts of self-gratification practiced by top corporate executives.

Such financial couplings can also be judged as socially perverse, since they eliminate economic competition, slash jobs, raise consumer prices, shrivel markets for local suppliers, stifle

innovation, and dramatically increase inequality. Despite all this, M&As are cheered by the moneyed establishment as wholesome corporate friskiness to be tolerated because they produce gushers of wealth.

Yes... but wealth for whom? Consider the brazen merger now being hotly pursued by Kroger and Albertsons – two supermarket giants that themselves are spawns of multiple mergers, having consolidated dozens of previously independent competitors like Safeway, Ralphs, Vons, and Randalls.

Thousands of employees were punted, hundreds of stores closed... and grocery prices soared. Yet, the two remaining giants now want anti-monopoly regulators to believe in a "magic math" theory that subtracting

competitors adds competition.

Bear in mind that neither chain is on the skids – both are making billions in profits, their CEO pay is astronomical, and investors are reaping fat dividends.

But, too much is not enough, and mergers are a profiteering freeway that paves its way to a bonanza of monopoly pricing. And that's why these two are frantic to cozy up, having already paid nearly a billion dollars in fees to lawyers, bankers, lobbyists, and PR agents to consummate their merger.

Oh, there's one more crude incentive that stimulates these corporate trysts: Executives quietly pocket merger payments if their deals go through. Albertsons' CEO, for example, is set to receive \$43 million for merging with Kroger.

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BUILDING MICHIGAN!

Sears, where America shopped for homes

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

By Marty Mulcahy



IN 1919, AS SHOWN in this advertisement, the 1,100 square-foot “Elsmore” bungalow could have been yours for under \$2,000. Of course, you would have to build it, or pay to have it built. Sears Roebuck and Co. was the largest seller of kit homes in the country, and they had a number of competitors, including Montgomery Ward. The Honor Built badge meant that this model was the finest quality sold by Sears.

Sears. The iconic American retailer, now with only nine surviving stores, was in its heyday “where America shops” for back-to-school clothes, jewelry, refrigerators – and over in the hardware department, hammers. If a product wasn’t on store shelves, the inches-thick Sears Catalog acted, for a century, as the Amazon website of its day, where all manner of goods could be ordered in-store or over the phone, and delivered within a few days to your front porch. And maybe that porch – and the rest of your home – was picked out of a Sears catalog, too. From 1908-1942, Sears offered a catalog of kit homes, complete with conceptual drawings, layout schematics, a variety of home styles that changed with the times, and a set price that could rise if you wanted, say, to add a fireplace. When Sears filled the order, they included everything, loaded it all on a railcar, and shipped the unbuilt home to the customer’s local rail depot. A truck would then deliver the goods to the customer, and included would be blueprints, numbered pieces, and directions on how to assemble the new abode. “These houses were exceptionally well built, and some still exist today,” says a blog post entry by Mike Langford in *Working By Hand: The Scale of Woodworking for Sears Kit Homes*. “Once someone picked a design and any extras, the material for the house was collected in the factory, packaged, and then shipped to site, where it would be assembled (we’re talking circa 30,000 parts per house). “Everything was included – wallpapers, paint and varnishes, lathe, shingles, roofing and windows (except for foundations, masonry, and things like plaster). Pre-cut lumber, when it first appeared in 1916, supposedly reduced construction time by up to 40 percent. The houses were generally designed using the balloon framing construction style, and clad in cypress shingles, masonry or stucco. The interior was finished with high quality materials such as oak, pine and maple woods.”

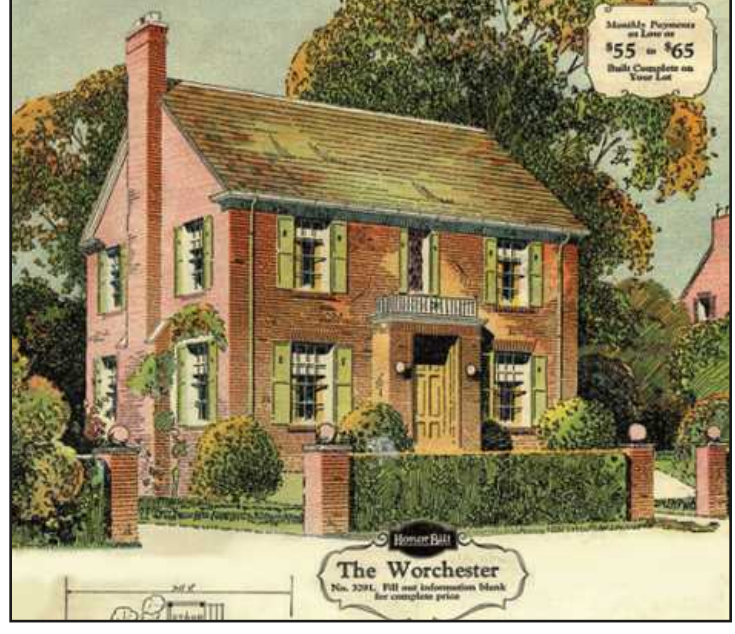
Today, Sears’ kit homes have a mystique and a fan following. By all accounts, the homes were well-designed, the raw materials were of good quality, and the entire dwelling was as good as any other locally constructed home. The only variable would be the skill of the carpenters, lathers and other tradespeople doing the work. “One of the most fascinating parts of the story,” says a website devoted to the homes, *SearsHouses.com*, “is that the framing lumber was (in most cases) pre-cut and labeled, allowing the homebuilder to follow an instruction booklet to help in the organized construction process. Included in the overall purchase, were all elements needed for the house, from lumber to roofing; wiring and plumbing; windows and doorknobs, and hinges and nails and screws; staircases and all of their parts, pre-mitered; flooring, bath tubs and sinks and faucets; kitchen cabinets and ironing boards; window screens, window shades, and light fixtures. “For some of these items, there were options (type of wiring, heating, plumbing fixtures, for example, or upgrades for flooring and trim wood). And any masonry items were

purchased through Sears, but obtained through a local supplier, rather than being shipped by Sears.” Often, the building party for the kit homes involved neighbors, like a barn-raising. According to the *Sears Archives*, Sears Roebuck and Co. sold between 70,000 and 75,000 mail-order kit homes. During that time, Sears designed 47 different housing styles, from the elaborate multi-story *Ivanhoe*, “with its elegant French doors and art glass windows,” to the simpler *Goldenrod*, “which served as a quaint, three-room and no-bath cottage for summer vacationers.” (An outhouse could be purchased separately for *Goldenrod* and similar cottage dwellers.) Customers could choose a house to suit their individual tastes and budgets. The ability to mass-produce the materials used in Sears homes lessened manufacturing costs. “Sears was not an innovative home designer,” the *Sears Archives* said. “Sears was instead a very able follower of popular home designs but with the added advantage of modifying houses and hardware according to buyer tastes. Individuals could even design their own homes and submit the blueprints to Sears, which would then ship off the appropriate pre-cut and fitted materials, putting the homeowner in full creative control. Customers had the freedom to build their own dream houses, and Sears helped realize these dreams through quality custom design and favorable financing.” Among the 47 different housing styles, Sears offered three lines of homes. Honor Built was the most expensive and of the highest quality, with upgraded interior materials. Standard Built homes were less insulated and designed for warmer climates, and the simply Simplex line was frequently only a couple of rooms, making it ideal for summer cottages.

The custom designing of some of the homes, encouraged by Sears, today makes it more difficult for modern homeowners to identify if their home is from a Sears kit. One website devoted to the subject, *kithouses.com*, has a database of 16,000 Sears kit homes. The cost of the kit homes ranged from \$650 to \$6,500. Sears homes were shipped all over the nation, primarily to the East Coast and the Midwest, and to Canada. Today Ohio has the largest number of the website’s identifiable Sears homes, 3,400+. Michigan is fifth in that category among the states, with 1,100+ identifiable Sears kit homes. Toward the end of the Sears kit home era, the introduction of drywall in the early 1940s made kit home construction even easier for semi-skilled homeowners. Before drywall, plaster and lathe wall-building techniques were used, which usually required skilled carpenters or lathers. “Sears homes took advantage of the new homebuilding material of drywall by shipping large quantities of this inexpensive manufactured product with the rest of the housing materials,” said *Sears Archives*. “Drywall offered advantages of low price, ease of installation, and was added fire-safety protection. It was also a good fit for the square design of Sears homes.” Sears opened a mortgage department in 1911 to help customers finance the homes, but that backfired during the Great Depression years in the 1930s. Sears was forced to foreclose on many of the homes they funded, creating a public relations disaster. A lumber shortage in the pre-World War II years was the final nail in the coffin for Sears kit homes.



THIS 1930 HOME on Touraine Street in East Lansing is one of the 1,100 or so surviving, identifiable Sears kit homes in Michigan. Called “The Worcester,” model, Sears could finance the home’s building materials for \$55-\$65 per month at the time. This was the introductory year for brick veneer for this style of house; previous years were sold with wood cladding. Sears welcomed and encouraged modifications to the original designs of its homes, and included all materials in its shipment to the owner.



Member to member, union volunteers get out the vote

(Continued from Page 1)
delivered almost every one. They delivered things we never asked for.”

Since that kickoff, trade union leaders in Michigan, and hundreds of volunteer members, have fanned out across the state to talk to fellow union members

about not only the importance of the presidential race, but voting for union-friendly county, state and congressional candidates.

Below is a sampling of those efforts among building trades unions in Michigan to get out the vote for worker-friendly candidates in Michigan. In an era

of communication via texting and phone calls, knocking on doors and approaching people isn’t easy – but it can be effective.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to help spread the word to voters and potential voters about supporting candidates who support Michigan’s working people.



VOLUNTEERS at IBEW Local 58 in Detroit gather last month to support the get-out-the-vote effort on behalf of Kamala Harris and other candidates who support organized labor. Photo credit: Mark Baker



UNION MEMBER-VOLUNTEERS gather at the Michigan AFL-CIO building in Lansing last month in preparation for knocking on doors and dropping literature supporting union-friendly candidates.

AFL-CIO’s Shuler: Union workers have election super powers in ‘24

(Continued from Page 1)
workers trust each other. We talk to each other in the break room every morning. We car-pool home. We’re on the factory floor together, or in the teacher’s lounge, or outside on a construction site, braving the elements, while everyone else is asleep. We know each other, inside and out. And when you combine that trust with this organizing machine we’ve built, this ability to connect with our members, our families, our neighbors and mobilize on a dime, you have a movement that can actually deliver voters – and win an election. **The power of unions.** Workers are growing our power in this country in a way we haven’t seen in a generation. Almost a quarter of the delegates to the Democratic National Convention in Chicago were union delegates, more than we’ve had in a long, long time. We are seen as a force to be reckoned with. And it’s about damn time.

What I hear from the young generation of workers coming up is that they can’t believe there used to be a time when you could work one full-time job, and afford to make a down payment on a home. That’s the daily reality for people all over this country. Workers in this country have never been more productive. We have never created the kind of wealth for companies that we are creating right now. But it’s not benefiting our workers. We need to fundamentally re-write the rules – by winning elections, by passing laws, by having the right to stand up for ourselves – if we’re going to balance the scales. All over the country, people are realizing there’s a movement where you actually can fight back, where you actually can get some power and some control over your future. It’s not about your race, your gender, age, orientation or, religion, it’s just about standing up for your freedom.

Strategy, organizing pay off. If you feel tired or alone right now, think about autoworkers in Chattanooga, right after they made history at Volkswagen, voting for representation by the United Auto Workers. Or our Machinists in Seattle, who filled a baseball stadium to tell Boeing to give them a fair contract. Or our sisters in the National Women’s Soccer League players association, who rewrote the sports rulebook and got rid of their draft, setting a new standard that gives them a voice in where they work, like every other worker in this country. These wins are not accidents. We’ve invested in our grassroots network all over the country, building local power and organizing capacity. Nearly half a million workers went on strike in 2023, a year that saw more than 2,700 union election filings, the most we’ve ever seen. Some 900,000 workers in unions won double-digit pay increases last year alone. That is power. What’s the point of building all this power on the ground, if we don’t use it when it really matters? When absolutely everything is on the line? In those swing states – Michigan, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Nevada – union support is driving up the margin of support for Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris. We are the difference. **How we win.** Our movement is full of joy and love, a way to have some fun and make your life better at the same time. We have the trust – with our union members, and the spouses, children and parents that we bring along. There’s a reason they call it “a union household,” which doubles and triples our impact. We have a well-oiled organizing machine in every state, especially in battleground states. We have workers who are actually trained in how to have those tough conversations, how to steer

them toward kitchen-table issues, and how to challenge someone, respectfully, if we need to. A few months ago I walked up to a guy in a MAGA hat on a picket line. In any other situation, the two of us probably wouldn’t have much to talk about. But as we started to talk about politics, he looked at me and said, “I’ll hear you out, because I know we both love our unions.” Those conversations are the key to everything. Talking to each other again. Empathy and grace, instead of vitriol. Coming together to solve problems that actually matter to our families.

Still-strong construction industry takes a breather **(Continued from Page 1)**
job openings.” The latest numbers showed Michigan with 203,200 workers in the construction industry in September 2024, up from 190,600 12 months prior. Total U.S. construction project starts took a step back, with the latest government figures showing a decline of 6 percent from August to September. But starts were still up 1 percent from a year earlier. “Construction starts are treading water,” said Richard Branch chief economist of Dodge Construction Network. “September’s (interest) rate cut was just the first step in unwinding a period of high rates and several more cuts will be needed to start moving construction projects through the planning process to start. More consistent growth in construction starts should begin to materialize early in the new year.”

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Outdoors

2024 deer hunting preview



With the archery deer hunting season already underway and the firearm deer season opener just around the corner, here are some regional hunting forecast notes from Michigan Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Division staffers.

Upper Peninsula. Most of the region saw an extremely mild 2023-2024 winter, which was a welcome change from the previous two winters. Low snowfall and lack of extreme cold likely resulted in fewer deer affected by winter starvation and predation.

The result was deer coming out of the winter in better condition and with better fawn production, with many sets of twins being observed this spring. While conditions are going to vary locally, soft and hard mast production, such as apples and beech nuts, looks good this year.

Despite no additional cases of chronic wasting disease being detected in Dickinson County since 2018, the DNR is still collecting baseline surveillance data for CWD in many counties across the U.P.

The DNR encourages hunters to consider submitting a sample for CWD testing from deer harvested in Baraga, Chippewa, Dickinson, Houghton, Keweenaw, Luce, Mackinac, Ontonagon and Schoolcraft counties.

A few regulation changes for the U.P. should be noted before heading into the woods this fall. After being removed in 2018, a three-point antler-point restriction when hunting with a single deer license was reinstated for deer management unit 122.

Antlerless hunting during late archery season with the single deer or deer combo license is prohibited after Dec. 10 in mid-snowfall zone deer management units 017, 021, 027, 036, 117, 149, 152, 249, 252, 349 and 249.

Antlerless access permits for DMU 351 were reduced from 1,000 to 0, making antlerless hunting with an antlerless license not available in those DMUs. Antlerless harvest is still an option with a single deer license or



HUNTERS CHECK IN a harvested deer in St. Ignace with the Mackinac Bridge as the backdrop. MDNR photos

deer combo license during the archery season through Dec. 10 (see previous paragraph).

Antlerless access permits for DMU 352 were reduced from 1,000 to 500.

For more on deer hunting regulations visit Michigan.gov/Deer.

Northern Lower Peninsula. An abundant mast crop last fall had deer heading into the winter in good shape. With an extremely mild winter, deer did not need to group up as much as they have during harder winters. This also made food readily available throughout the winter and resulted in deer coming through the spring healthy and with what appears to be good fawn survival. Most does have been observed with fawns, and many with twins.

Deer numbers can vary greatly across the northern Lower Peninsula, with some areas seeing high numbers while other areas are experiencing low numbers.

If you are in an area where deer are plentiful and you see evidence of browse lines (boundaries between normal vegetation growth and areas where the veg-

etation has been eaten by deer) or lack of natural forage where you hunt, you may want to consider harvesting an antlerless deer or two to help manage the deer herd.

If you hunt an area where deer numbers remain lower or are more balanced with the available habitat, it may be appropriate to continue to keep antlerless harvest similar to past practices.

Along with ongoing testing for bovine tuberculosis, the DNR continues to gather baseline data for the presence of chronic wasting disease across the state. This is being done to gain a better understanding of where the disease may occur in areas where adequate testing has not been done yet.

Hunters are encouraged to consider submitting a sample for CWD testing in several counties where the DNR seeks to establish a data baseline. Samples for 2024 are being sought from Antrim, Arenac, Benzie, Cheboygan, Clare, Gladwin, Grand Traverse, Iosco, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Ogemaw and Otsego counties.

Testing for bovine tuberculosis continues in Alcona, Alpena, Cheboygan, Crawford,

Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle and Roscommon counties. Hunters are encouraged to submit heads for bovine tuberculosis testing as well.

A few regulation changes for the northern Lower Peninsula are in effect. In deer management units where the seasons are open, early and late antlerless seasons are now open on private and public lands. In the past, these seasons were only available on private lands.

Muzzleloader season for Zone 2 will now be open to any legal firearm. This season is open on private and public lands and will have the same harvest regulations as the firearm deer hunting season.

Southern Lower Peninsula. Deer numbers remain high throughout much of the region. Routinely mild winters and abundant summer foods mean deer are rarely negatively affected by winter mortality. Fawn survivorship remains high, with many twins, and even triplets, being reported. Precipitation across the region this spring and summer was good, but timing varied depending on the specific area. Farmers in some



A WHITE-TAILED DOE in a Michigan forest is pictured.

places were able to plant crops early, while others had to wait for the ground to dry out and plant some crops late. Timing of harvest this fall will vary accordingly, but dry conditions in late summer/early fall may have corn harvest trending earlier than last year.

Rainfall totals in late summer have also been variable, with many areas seeing drier conditions. Cases of epizootic hemorrhagic disease (EHD) have been reported in many counties, especially in southwest Michigan.

Reported cases started earlier than has been seen in most years. These earlier cases and continuing hot, dry conditions could allow the virus to be on the landscape for an extended period, as a good frost is needed to kill off the midge flies that transmit the virus.

For areas where the virus has been circulating since late July or early August, impacts on the local deer herd could be extensive. Areas where the virus did not start circulating until mid- to late September will likely see less effects. The DNR will be closely monitoring these conditions and encourages people to report suspected cases of EHD at Michigan.gov/EyesInTheField.

Chronic wasting disease is still present in many counties in southern Michigan, and continued monitoring is still a priority for the DNR. However, while the DNR continues to get baseline data for CWD presence across the state, the department is not

actively seeking samples from counties in the southern Lower Peninsula this year.

This part of the state has already had extensive sample collection, and resources are instead being used to collect data in other parts of the state. If you hunt in a county with known CWD cases, there are still options for testing if you choose to do so – see Michigan.gov/CWD for more information.

There are a handful of regulation changes in effect this fall for the southern Lower Peninsula.

The early and late antlerless seasons are now open on private and public lands. In the past, these seasons were only available on private lands.

The extended late archery season, formerly known as the “urban archery season,” has been expanded to include Huron, Kent, Lapeer, Sanilac, St. Clair (except deer management unit 174), Tuscola and Washtenaw counties, in addition to Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties. This season runs Jan. 1-31.

A new extended late antlerless season will run from Jan. 2-12 in select counties in the southern Lower Peninsula. For details regarding this new season, visit Michigan.gov/Deer.

Hunters in most of the southern Lower Peninsula should consider harvesting an additional antlerless deer beyond what they would normally harvest. While some properties may require the harvest of dozens of antlerless deer annually to keep population numbers in check, more hunters harvesting just one more antlerless deer than normal will have a positive effect on balancing deer numbers and reducing the negative impacts of deer overabundance.

In areas where epizootic hemorrhagic disease has been present for several weeks, additional antlerless harvest may not be necessary. Where EHD hasn't been on the landscape as long, antlerless harvest is likely going to still be required. While prolonged EHD presence can produce substantial impacts to a local deer herd, its distribution on the landscape can be extremely variable.

Some locations a short distance from severely impacted areas might not experience any effects of EHD. Parts of EHD-affected counties are likely to continue to need increased antlerless harvest efforts.

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