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

# National Apprenticeship Week Highlights Success

More than 300 visitors came through the Carpenters Training Center in South Charleston as part of a series of events during National Apprenticeship Week – November 13 – 17.

Similar events took place in Ashland, KY and Parkersburg.

“We had a great turnout from vocational schools,” said Jeremy Jeffers, Training Director for the Carpenters. “Kanawha, Wayne, Putnam, Lincoln, Boone and Wood Counties all came.”

The training center is affiliated with the Keystone Mountain Lakes Regional Council of Carpenters and numerous participating contractors.

West Virginia craft apprenticeship programs have around 2,000 apprentices at any one time. A combined 29 programs in the state taking in more than 500 apprentices each year. ■



Vocational students take tours of the Carpenters training facility in South Charleston, on Thursday November 16, as part of Apprentice Week events in the state by a variety of crafts.

## Lawyers Funded by Murray Energy in Related Case Judge Rules for Moundsville Power Permit, Against Ohio Valley Jobs Alliance

Kanawha Circuit Court Judge Joanna Tabit finally has ruled against the Ohio Valley Jobs Alliance (OVJA) in their challenge to an air permit for the Moundsville Power project.

The November 15 ruling comes some 15 months after OVJA filed their Circuit Court appeal of the air permit. OVJA's Secretary-Treasurer stated their attorneys and experts have been funded by Murray Energy

at a recent PSC hearing.

The recent ruling may not be the end of the long delay caused by the group because they have until December 15 to appeal the Circuit Court decision to the WV Supreme Court of Appeals.

“We have won an important battle but we may be losing the war because of the long delays this group has created,” said Steve White, ACT Direc-

tor.

The project developers first submitted their air permit in October of 2013 and received approval a year later. In April of 2015, because upgrades made by to a nearby substation meant more power could be generated, an Administrative Update (AU) to the air permit was sought.

OVJA challenged the update and lost. They appealed the air permit

through the DEP's administrative process where they lost again. They then appealed to Kanawha Circuit Court on August 19, 2016. They have now lost again.

In Judge Tabit's decision she wrote “the Court ... finds that the Class II Administrative Update issued by the DAQ to Moundsville Power and modified by the Board was proper

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# 2018 Legislative Session Starts January 10

## \$800 Million in Road Bonds Approved for Sale in Early 2018, \$400 Million for FY 2019

A Special Legislative Session was held on December 4 to give Governor Jim Justice the final approval needed to sell road bonds already ratified by voters.

Senate Bill 3001 gives Gov. Justice the authority to sell up to \$1.6 billion in general obligation bonds by 2021.

Justice has until July 1 to sell up to \$800 million in bonds, up to \$400 million in fiscal year 2018 and up to \$200 million in fiscal years 2019 and 2020.

The state has listed more than 600 planned infrastructure projects among all 55 counties.

Delegate Scott Brewer (D-Mason)

attempted to amend the bill to require the same wage protections currently in place for federal highway funds for the bond funds.

"I argued Davis-Bacon coverage would help local workers and businesses compete and keep our tax dollars in-state," said Brewer. "I also pointed out the repeal of our state prevailing wage law has completely failed to bring any of the promised savings but instead has hurt our local workers, contractors and communities."

Brewer pointed to evidence gathered on the [www.WVBrokenPromise.com](http://www.WVBrokenPromise.com) web site to back up his claim.

ACT has created the web site to focus on school projects where savings of 25% were promised.

"We can see the bids and we can see the payrolls," said Brewer. "It is just as we predicted, no savings, with wage and benefit cuts. It's time for the legislature to recognize they made a mistake and restore prevailing wage."

However Speaker of the House Tim Armstead (R-Kanawha) ruled the amendment not germane meaning it was not voted on.

Given the make-up of the current legislature and leadership it is unlikely any legislation to restore prevailing wage will be placed on an agenda even for discussion.

West Virginia's 2018 Legislative Session will begin Wednesday, January 10.

Another tough budget year is expected as well as some bad bills that failed to pass in the last regular session.

In the 2017 session legislation aimed at making the wages paid on public projects secret almost passed and is likely to return. Legislation to ban any government agency from asking about a contractor's track re-

cord was also close to passing in 2017 and may return in 2018.

Just asking a question about a contractor's track record would be made illegal. Questions about completion times, wage violations, safety violations, excessive change orders or if a contractor participates in a training

program, pays any benefits or hires locally could all be made illegal. ■

**"I argued Davis-Bacon coverage would help local workers and businesses compete and keep our tax dollars in-state,"**

**Scott Brewer,**

*Delegate (D-Mason)*

## Local 625 Food Drive

Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 625 Apprentices, for the third year, put together a holiday season food drive for veterans.

Apprentices gathered 5070 food items, 1620 more than last year, for the VFW, which in turn made 75 baskets for Veterans who need help.

According to Training Coordinator Brett Matthews the food drive will from this time forward be named the Mike Oldham II Memorial food drive.

Oldham was a member of Local 625 and a decorated soldier who served in Afghanistan and Iraq. He was tragically killed in a motorcycle accident in 2016.

"Mike was a good union man and a great patriot," said Matthews. "The apprentices wanted to name it in his honor for his service to the country and the local."

Local 625 is based in Charleston and serves 15 counties in southern West Virginia. ■



UA Local 625 apprentices and members of the VFW got together for a food drive for local veterans and their families who need assistance during the holidays.

## Judge Rules

**Continued from Page 1**

in all respects, and that the OVJA has not demonstrated that the Board erred in affirming issuance of the Class II Administrative Update.

The Court further finds that the OVJA does not have a substantial right that is prejudiced by issuance of the AU."

During an October 23 hearing before Judge Tabit lawyers for OVJA were asked who was funding them. "Coal Interest's" was the response. Earlier in the month OVJA was before the state Public Service Commission where they have intervened in a siting certificate case for the Brooke County Power project.

When a representative was asked the same question, who was paying

for the many lawyers representing the group, the answer was "Murray Energy."

OVJA, with the help of the same law firm, has also tried to block energy projects in Ohio.

OVJA questioned the South Field Energy natural gas power plant in Columbiana County, Ohio and the same legal firm filed the paperwork.

The same firm is apparently opposing wind energy projects in Ohio on behalf of another group called CAARE (Campaign for American Affordable and Reliable Energy).

According to a recent news report it is unclear who is a member or officer of CAARE or who is paying for their services in these cases. ■

## Promised Savings 'Just a Sham'

# WV Prevailing Wage Repeal Hurts Workers, Contractors and Communities

Repeal of state prevailing wage law went into effect in May of 2016.

With more than a year of data the claim of great savings for taxpayers has never materialized.

ACT has created a web site called WVBrokenPromise.com where project data is collected and displayed.

The focus has been on school construction because proponents of prevailing wage repeal often promised huge savings to taxpayer in the amount of 25 percent or more.

The common theme was to claim three, and at times four schools could be built without prevailing wage for the same price as three schools.

The 'three for four' claim equates to a 25 percent reduction.

This claim was challenged repeatedly before legislators by both workers and contractors.

Labor costs typically are 25 per-

cent of any project so to claim such all have been realized.

a savings means workers never get paid.

However the protests, and piles of data showing no savings would result from prevailing wage repeal, were ignored by the Republican leadership.

Repeal eventually passed on very slim margins, and with a few exceptions along party lines.

No Democrats voted for repeal.

Data collected

since repeal shows that no savings at

**"You can count the hours in a project and figure out what is not going into apprenticeship programs, drug and safety training, and other benefit programs,"**

**Dave Efaw,**

*Secretary-Treasurer  
WV State Building Trades*

Bid results are almost the same from contractors who continue to pay at or above the prevailing wage levels as compared to those who have slashed wages and all but eliminated benefits.

"The promised savings have not materialized because they were just a sham from the start," said Dave Efaw, Secretary-Treasurer of the WV State Building Trades.

"It is time for the legislature to fix

this problem they have created and restore the prevailing wage law."

ACT is not only documenting the lack of savings, they are also documenting the loss of local jobs to imported workers, the decline of wages, the decline of apprentices, and poor quality found at a number of projects.

The total cost to taxpayers is not known but ACT is looking for a way to get reliable data to show legislators the costs.

"You can count the hours in a project and figure out what is not going into apprenticeship programs, drug and safety training, and other benefit programs," said Efaw. "You can also calculate the taxes not paid by imported workers, all of which add up to a bad deal for communities."

For more information go to [www.wvbrokenpromise.com](http://www.wvbrokenpromise.com) ■

**MUB Customers Say**

**"Hire Local Construction Workers!"**

and

**MUB Ratepayers Want**

**LOCAL JOBS FOR LOCAL WORKERS**

These two messages are rotating on a electronic billboard on the Star City Bridge near Morgantown is promoting the hiring of local workers at Morgantown Utility Board (MUB) projects.

Local workers, who like all ratepayers recently faced steep rate increases, have been upset that construction jobs were going to out-of-area workers on a large \$70 million water treatment upgrade.

ACT sponsored the billboard to help raise awareness around 'jobs for local construction workers' as an important issue for communities.

MUB officials and local worker representatives have had recent meetings to discuss concerns.

## Operating Engineers #132 Apprenticeship

Operating Engineers Local 132 wants qualified candidates for their heavy duty equipment operator apprenticeship program.

The three year program trains in all aspects of operating heavy equipment including bulldozers, backhoes, cranes and excavators.

"We want members to be well versed in all types of equipment," said Allen Nelson, Training Director. "We focus on safety and productivity."

Each year an apprentice spends five weeks at the training center located south of Parkersburg.

Most of the training takes place during the winter.

Apprentices must get at least 1,000 hours of paid on-the-job training to advance each year.

Applications will be accepted at any WorkForce West Virginia Center

from January 8 through 19 between the hours of 9:00am and 3:00pm, Monday through Friday.

In order to qualify a person must be at least 18 years old, have a high school diploma or equivalent and have been a resident of West Virginia for at least one year.

An aptitude test will be given by the WorkForce Center.

A successful applicant will have a valid WV driver's license, be physically able to perform the work of the trade and pass a drug test.

The recruitment, selection, employment and training of apprentices shall be without discrimination because of age, race, color, religion, national origin, or sex and will conform to ADA regulations.

For more information call (304) 273-4852. ■

# IBEW Local 246 Steubenville Volunteers at Nutcracker Village, Advent Market

IBEW Local 246 members help to create an annual holiday display called the Nutcracker Village and Advent Market in Fort Steuben by volunteering time and expertise.

This is the third year of the community event.

The display features more than 150 Nutcrackers over 6 feet tall, all have a different theme.

Hayrides and live entertainment take place every weekend from Thanksgiving until

the end of December.

**“We try and stay active in the community and donate time to good causes...This is a good cause as it brings the community together.”**

**Frank Redmond,**

*President  
IBEW Local 246*

This year's display features two Christmas trees and thousands of lights.

IBEW Local 246 members Frank Redmond, David Pietro, Jake Lilly and Eric Nutter donated their time, along with other community volunteers, to erect a 35 foot steel framed Christmas Tree and get power to the tree and train that encircles it.

The feat took 10 volunteers over

nine hours. The tree had to be transported from storage to site, a metal frame erected, thousands of branches unboxed, inspected and decorated.

Last year members built, wired, and installed four temporary electric panels to power the whole vil-

lage. “We try and stay active in the community and donate time to good causes,” said Local 246 President Frank Redmond. “This is a good cause as it brings the community together.” ■

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Local 246 members Frank Redmond, Jake Lilly, Eric Nutter and Dave Pietro work on setting up lights and decorating a tree as part of the Nutcracker Village and Advent Market display in Fort Steuben, Ohio.

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