

ASSOCIATION OF MASTER PAINTERS NEWSLETTER

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CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

BRUCE RUINSKY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

What follows is an update of pending issues and events in the Association.

First a note of background. For the past several months, I have drafted and updated a more formal newsletter. It is my intention to begin publishing a newsletter regularly, but due to conflicts with other pressing matters as well as some complications involving the publishing program being used, the process has been delayed. For this I ask for your patience. Until the newsletter is in place, it is my intention to give you an informal newsletter as a detailed update of Association business.

Safety

As a result of the recent crane accidents in New York City, the Mayor's office has stepped up enforcement of all existing safety regulations. This has resulted in numerous job shut downs across the city. I have attended meetings through and with the Building Trades Employers Association [BTEA] on these issues. The City Council is considering new legislation to address safety concerns. Much of this legislation would impose requirements and obligations on employers that are much stricter than those presently in effect. This program has been entitled "The Site Specific Safety Plan" and is scheduled to be presented to the City Council on July 23, 2008. The BTEA under the leadership of Lou Coletti has been in negotiation with both City Council members and City Administration officials over the specific terms of this legislation. The purpose of these negotiations is to moderate the terms of the new regulations without minimizing the need to focus on safety and training. The most immediate consequence is likely be the following:-

1. A requirement to conduct weekly safety meetings on every job site to address hazardous conditions and the need to satisfy safety requirements.
2. The requirement that all workers on the job site must have successfully passed a ten (10) hour OSHA course or equivalent Department of Buildings approved safety course.

This proposal is consistent with the new state law I recently sent you a reminder about [requiring ten (10) hour OSHA training for all workers on public jobs]. Once the final terms of the legislation are adopted by the City Council, I will send you a review and explanation of its provisions.

As I noted in a recent memo, District Council 9's training center is continuing to add safety classes, the next scheduled classes are:

COURSE: 10-Hour OSHA	
DATE: July 19, 2008	TIME: 8:30 A.M.-3:30 P.M.
COURSE: 10-Hour OSHA	
DATE: July 26, 2008	TIME: 8:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.
COURSE: 10-Hour OSHA	
DATE: Each Saturday in August	TIME: 8:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.

All sessions of each individual course must be attended to receive completion certificate.

In an effort to expand available classes, the Union has requested and received assistance from the IUPAT in the form of additional trainers.

Apprentice Committee

Several months ago a new apprentice committee was formed. The members of the committee are Association first Vice President, Peter Cafiero; Association Board Chairman, Angelo Lopes; Union Business Manager, Joe Ramaglia; Union President, Bill Elfeld; Funds Administrator, Greg Vagelatos; Funds Auditor, Fred Moss; Apprentice Director, Gus Diamantis; and myself. Since the formation of the new apprentice committee in March, 2008, three (3) meetings have been held. The following matters have been the subject of these meetings:-

1. A new apprentice center is being created in Poughkeepsie, NY to service the northern part of the jurisdiction. The purchase of the building by the Funds for this purpose is in its final stages. The committee has been meeting with an architect for the purpose of reviewing plans for configuration of this facility.
2. The committee has met to address concerns expressed by some employers about their inability to obtain new apprentices. Apprentice Director Gus Diamantis informed the apprentice committee at its most recent meeting, which was held on July 1, 2008, that the new class of apprentices has started, and that there should be no shortage of apprentices going forward. Please contact me if you have any question or problems regarding the availability of apprentices.
3. The committee has discussed the fact that there were very few wall-coverer apprentices being trained. It is the position of the Union that as the wall-coverer workforce ages and enters retirement there will be insufficient new journeymen to replace them. Discussions on this matter are ongoing.

4. As a result of expanding activities in the apprentice center, the committee met to discuss conditions at the facility. To ensure proper maintenance and cleaning, new personnel have been hired.

Jurisdictional Dispute

As noted in my recent memo to you, the Jurisdictional dispute brought by the Plasterers Local 262 on the issue of the application of venetian plaster was resolved in a New York Plan hearing in favor of District Council 9. It should be noted that this result was a product in large part of the efforts of District Council 9's leadership, as well as close cooperation by a number of Association members and other signed employers.

Accountant

As a result of the passing of long time Association Accountant, Nellon Chu, a new accounting firm was hired to handle related matters for the Association and the Industry Promotion Fund. This firm is O'Connor, Davies, Munns & Dobbins, LLP. I am happy to report that over the past several months they have updated the form and content of all required financial reports and have put into place an efficient and modern system for our office bookkeeping procedures.

Website

Over the past several weeks a problem arose with the Association website. As many of you may have noted, the website has crashed on a number of occasions and is presently inaccessible. I have been working closely with the website designers to remedy the problem. As a result of a computer programming problem which was a result of either faulty programming code, virus or other security breach, the website content could not be updated without causing the site to crash. Although the exact problem has still not been identified, I have been assured that the website will be back online shortly and will be stable going forward.

Association Office

The Association office can provide support in a number of areas which I am pleased to say many of you have availed yourselves of. By contacting myself or Association Executive Assistant, Esther Sebro-Borneo, you can obtain copies of any needed documents, (by email or by hard copy), Trade Agreements, membership lists, information published by affiliate organizations, as well as city and state laws and regulations. If the office does not have it, we will get it for you. Finally, as you know, Esther Sebro-Borneo is a notary public and is available to assist you whenever needed.

Sub-contracting

Pursuant to the terms of the Trade Agreement, sub-contracting can only be done to union companies. Recently, issues have arisen regarding the use of tradesmen who are members of other unions. Two examples of this issue is the use of a company signed with the Metal Polishers to do electrostatic spraying and the use of members of the carpenters' union to install fabric panels. The Union has raised objections to this practice by some of our employers on the grounds that the work in question is within the jurisdiction of District Council 9 and that use of labor from these other unions violates the jurisdictional and sub-contracting provisions of the Trade Agreement. The Association is in discussion with the Union on these issues. I will update you on this matter and will provide you with information regarding the resolution of it as soon as possible.

Liaison with Government

I am pleased to report that through direct contact and by virtue of participation in affiliate organizations such as the BTEA and the STA, the Association has developed increasing contact with city government. In particular, as a result of contact with the city comptroller at various official functions including our annual luncheon, a strong line of regular communication is open with that important office.

Joint Trade Committee

Over the past six (6) months, the majority of Joint Trade Committee hearings have involved charges that employers have failed to file required job registration and overtime permits. I would like to take this opportunity to re-emphasize the fact that I can review contract provisions with you and am available to review charges in advance and to address problems with them. The best response to a charge is to come to the hearing prepared. Review the contract provision in issue and if you have documentation to support your position, bring it with you.

New Members

Over the past year, the following companies have joined the Association:- Christine Painting, Inc., Christine Knoblock; Fine Construction Specialties LLC, Neil Singh; Jewel Painting Co., Inc., Josephine Hani; Rose Contracting Co., Inc., Marni Sivin; and Trinity Painting and Dec. Corp., Robert Capaldo.

Appointments

I am pleased to report that Association President, Todd Nugent was elected to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Finishing Contractors Association. Peter Cafiero, our first Vice President was selected to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Finishing Trades Institute and was elected to the Board of Directors of the Subcontractors Trade Association. I believe that our participation and the important positions attained by Association leaders in these organizations have been valuable to the Association.

LMCI [Labor Management Cooperation Initiative]

The LMCI's Finishing Industries Forum will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada November 10-13, 2008. The Association will be represented by several Officers and Board members. Please contact me if you have an interest in attending this event.

BTEA Construction Industry Partnership

This 12th Annual Winter Conference is scheduled to be conducted on February 8-10, 2009 in Hollywood, FL. It will also be attended by Officers and members of the Board of Directors.

Green Construction

The LMCI's program on green construction which I recently wrote you about is scheduled for August 6-8, 2008 at the IUPAT Training Center in Hanover, MD. The program is designed to give subcontractors, project managers, estimators, and lead foreman an overview of this subject. The program will include LEED procedures, bid interpretation and bid specs including LEED specifications, LEED financials and best practices in green construction. Please contact the Association office for more information about this program.

Convention

As you know, the Association 183rd Annual Convention is being held at the Ritz-Carlton resort hotel in Naples, Florida on October 23-26, 2008. The response thus far has been outstanding; in fact, we are way ahead of schedule in registrations and bookings. I urge you to attend, to send us your registration, and make your travel arrangements as soon as possible. As always, the Association office is available to help you in any way possible in making arrangements or getting you information to do so.

Scholarship

Interviews for graduation high school seniors applying for the Louis Elkins Scholarship will be held in mid August. If you have any questions or wish to recommend a candidate for the scholarship, please contact the Association office.

Once again, I offer this update as a temporary means of giving you information and hope to have a regular and more formalized newsletter published in the near future. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can do anything to assist you or if you have any questions or comments or about anything the Association can do to meet your needs.