

CRC

# CARPENTER

The Newsletter of the St. Louis-Kansas City  
Carpenters Regional Council



JAN / FEB 2020



# Al Bond, Jr.

## Executive Secretary-Treasurer



*Al Bond*



It's a new year, in fact a new decade, and what a year it will be for all of us in the regional council.

In November, we'll join the rest of America voting in the next presidential election. On the national level, and even on the local level, these political elections are having extreme consequences for people like us.

Our livelihood has come under attack by well-funded extremists and the elected officials who are willing to put big money donors and corporate lobbyists ahead of working families. We all remember what almost happened in Missouri in 2018. It was only because of our solidarity and some very hard work that we were able to flex our muscle and keep Missouri from becoming the next "Right to Work" state.

As we often say, elections have consequences and this year is going to be an important one for us. Let's be smart and support those who stand up for us.

It will also be an exciting year for high profile, landmark construction. In Kansas City, our members will be getting years worth of steady work thanks to the KCI airport renovation. It's the biggest construction project to come to KC in decades.

And in St. Louis, NGA is providing another billion-dollar build, a ton of good jobs and a new beginning for a long neglected section of North City.

And to keep us all healthy in the new year, I'm eager to see construction start on our new KC Wellness Center. The St. Louis location has succeeded beyond our wildest expectations, so much so that we are already planning an expansion to the facility, which opened just five months ago.

You can read more about that, and many other important things going on across our council, in this latest issue of the *CRC Carpenter*. Thank you for staying involved and informed.



STLKCCRC

*The CRC Carpenter  
is a publication  
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Communications  
Department*

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# In The NEWS



## Not So Fast



After three years of talks over privatizing St. Louis Lambert Airport, city leaders abruptly pulled the plug. In January, EST Al Bond and Adolphus Pruitt, head of the local NAACP, held a press conference to encourage interested bidders to show the public what could be possible. A public-private partnership would create jobs and finally give St. Louis the kind of world-class air hub it needs. "We have to kick it up a notch in St. Louis and our region," Bond told the news media. "We're just getting our ass kicked, to be frank with you."



## Get Smart



Is pushing our kids into college killing the middle-class dream? Burdened with debt and four-year degrees that are no longer useful, experts are starting to argue that a college education, and the rising debt that comes with it, can actually prevent graduates from building wealth. There is strong benefit, they say, to forgoing college unless the student wants to be a doctor, lawyer, engineer, or other specialized career. All the more reason for today's young job seekers to consider a skilled trade instead.

## Peanuts



There's even more evidence that organized labor is needed now, more than ever. The Brookings Institute has released a bombshell study showing that 44% of working Americans are stuck in low-pay jobs, with a median wage of just \$10.22 per hour. "Nearly half of all workers earn wages that are not enough to promote economic security," the study finds.



## Way to Go

At the 35th annual Salute to Construction in Springfield, Missouri, Kenton Payne (Local 978) was recognized as Superintendent of the Year. A longtime member of the Carpenters, Payne is a superintendent with DeWitt & Associates. Way to go Kenton!



## INNOVATIVE MEMBER CARE SEES **HEALTHY GROWTH**

Carpenter families flock  
to convenient, affordable  
Wellness Center

It's no secret that Americans have a low opinion of the nation's health care system. Long wait times, impersonal care and out-of-control costs are common complaints heard from both experts and the patients who need medical services.

Despite all the talk and attention paid to the problem (just look at the current crop of presidential candidates and their pledges to fix U.S. healthcare) no one seriously expects the state of medical care delivery to improve any time soon.

Amid the frustration, the regional council had an inspired idea: What if we took control of our own care instead of waiting for others to find solutions?

In September, the first Carpenters Wellness Center opened its doors at the union's St. Louis headquarters. Exclusively dedicated to treating union carpenters and their families, the center has exceeded all expectations.

By the end of 2019, more than 2,000 appointments had been scheduled for everything from eye exams to chiropractic therapy. The center was designed to be a one-stop-shop where users could be seen by an array of specialists prepared to treat

job-related aches and pains, as well as routine family diagnostics.

"I haven't had care like this or customer service like this in a long time," said Colleen Chatfield, wife of member Rick Chatfield (Local 97). "If you're not using the Wellness Center you're missing out on excellent care. No out of pocket costs for an office visit, prescriptions or anything."

A quick scan of the Carpenters' Facebook page finds many members commenting on the exceptional service they've experienced at the Wellness Center.

The experiment has proved so successful that plans to rent out some building space had to be scrapped in order to expand patient care services. An additional 10,000-square-feet is being freed up to accommodate the 1,000 visitors who are coming through the door each month.

Later this year, the regional council will cut the ribbon on its second wellness center, this one in Kansas City.

Like our St. Louis facility, the new location will be staffed by healthcare professionals from Cerner, a Kansas City-based health services and staffing provider.

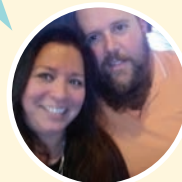
*Big fan.  
Will be back soon.*  
**Luke Engelmeyer**



*Everyone there was fantastic!  
One stop shop!*  
**Todd Thames**



*What a beautiful facility.  
Great job everyone!*  
**Colleen Colbert Chatfield**



*One of the best things I've  
experienced in years. I urge you to  
go. Best staff and doctors!*  
**JB Bakula**







# HELPING HANDS

KC Carpenter Learns the Meaning of Brotherhood

Midwest District VP Mark McGriff (left) and Kansas City Coordinator Rocky Kloth (right) surprise the Mercia family with a new Jeep.

When doctors told Ryan Mercia they would have to amputate his leg, the Kansas City carpenter asked one question: “How soon can I go back to work?”

As the sole provider for his growing family, and paying for his wife’s nursing school classes, the 35-year-old worried about a long recovering and missing months of work.

An avid motocross racer, Ryan was coming down a portion of track with two jumps lined up. He angled his way forward but on the way up the first jump, his bike suffered a mechanical error. Unable to correct it 40 feet in the air, he crashed straight into the second jump.

“It destroyed everything. My foot peg went through my heel and ankle, 10 inches into my tibia and fibula. It changed everything really fast,” he said.

Surgeons tried to repair Ryan’s foot, ankle and leg, but ultimately it required too much metal for his body to support. The only option was amputation, just below the knee.

Eight months after the procedure, Ryan was fitted with a prosthetic. His care team at St. Luke’s said he made the fastest recovery of anyone they’ve seen. “I didn’t even need the parallel bars,” Ryan boasted. “I put on my leg and stood up and walked.”

With mounting medical debt, a wife in nursing school and a young daughter, Ryan was determined to return to carpentry and doing what he loves. By February 2019, he was back on the job.

“Without the support of my union, we would have lost everything,” he admits. “From the awesome health insurance, American Income

Life benefit, support and even bringing Christmas gifts for my daughter...we wouldn’t have made it.” Western District Coordinator Rocky Kloth connected the Mercia family with an organization in Kansas City called Working Families’ Friend, which helped with financial assistance.

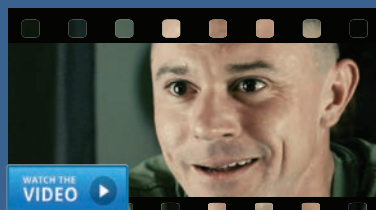
Even with the superior benefits offered by the Carpenters and the generosity of nonprofits and friends, Ryan was still struggling to pay off his medical bills.

After hearing the story, UBC General President Doug McCarron was so moved by Ryan’s amazing attitude that he worked with the Carpenters’ Helping Hands organization to secure a donation to the Mercia family and a brand new Jeep to ensure they have reliable transportation. The organization provides aid to carpenters and their families working through hard times.

Overwhelmed by the continued support of the union—from the international level to the local—Ryan and his family extend a profound “thank you.”

“My union is my family. You’re not a number here. We’re family.”

“My union is my family.”



See more of Ryan’s story at [Youtube.com/TheCarpDC](https://www.youtube.com/TheCarpDC)

# OPEN DOORS

**Job seekers turn out to hear what the Carpenters has to offer.**

This year's National Apprenticeship Week, held annually during the second week of November, came during a moment in time when experts are sounding the alarm about the future of America's workforce. That might explain why interest in apprenticeship programs is seeing a historic spike.

"This was the best attended open house we've ever had," CJAP coordinator Craig Hood said. Every year during Apprenticeship Week, the regional council opens the doors to its training school in South St. Louis County. Instructors and administrators are on hand to welcome perspective students, give tours and answer questions about starting a career in professional carpentry.



CJAP staff were overwhelmed at the number of young, and even not-so-young people, who showed up this year to find out what the Carpenters union has to offer.

Jalen Thomas, a 25-year-old warehouse worker from East St. Louis, said he's looking for a change. "I'm very passionate about building. I want to get into residential carpentry and learn how to build my dream house one day. I'm all in. It's time to get certified and put my skills to use."

Thomas echoes other American workers who are finding higher education prohibitively expensive in the new millennium. Couple that with automation that is eliminating many once-reliable occupations, like warehouse worker, and you have a perfect storm where millions of job seekers find themselves with too few career options.

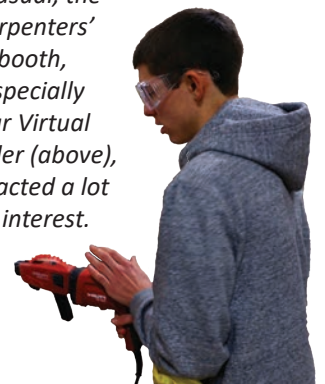
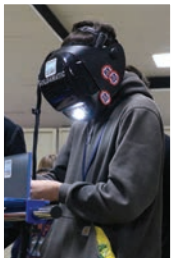
National Apprenticeship Week was conceived five years ago to get America rethinking the future of jobs and to help struggling industries promote their apprenticeship programs; the kind of programs that are training people for jobs that are actually in demand and pay a better than average wage.

**"I'm very passionate about building. I want to build my dream house one day."**  
*Jalen Thomas*

## METRO CONSTRUCTION CAREER EXPO



*More than 1,000 high schoolers across southern Illinois attended the 2019 Construction Career Expo in Belleville. As usual, the Carpenters' booth, especially our Virtual Welder (above), attracted a lot of interest.*



***Congratulations to Clint Mosier (Wies Drywall & Construction) honored by the Wall & Ceiling Contractors of Metro St. Louis as the Carpenters Apprentice of the Year.***



# WHAT TO EXPECT in 2020

## Political Priorities Include Tackling the Payroll Fraud Epidemic

**W**hile the presidential race has been heating up for several months, there's much more on the political horizon in 2020 than just the race for the White House.

In December, Council staff and members traveled to the UBC International Training Center in Las Vegas to discuss the 2020 elections at all levels of government—from president down to municipal offices—and discuss ways to make sure labor-friendly candidates are elected to office.

Attendees heard from General President Doug McCarron, national polling experts, regional councils with electoral victories, and more.

In addition to working to elect candidates who support our issues, our regional council will be working to elevate the issue of payroll fraud.

The Political, Organizing and Communications teams will be working together to report cases of payroll fraud and worker misclassification and shine a light on this critical issue.



In Illinois, we're working with Gov. JB Pritzker to pass legislation that holds general contractors accountable if their subcontractors engage in shady business practices that cost the government the tax revenue it's owed.

In Missouri, we're working with Gov. Mike Parson on policy ideas that could combat worker misclassification. One idea under discussion is creating a task force to investigate the current effectiveness of enforcement and enforcement measures.

In Kansas, we're working with both the state Department of Labor and Gov. Laura Kelly to create policy changes surrounding tax fraud and labor issues. This includes helping promote a tax fraud hotline and website and reviewing enforcement processes to identify improvements.

2020 will be a big year for politics, and it's important that our members get out and vote!

Stay tuned for important endorsement announcements as election season gears up.

## NOTICE

### • ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS •

You are officially notified that the Forty-Second General Convention of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America will be held beginning **Monday, August 24, 2020**. The General Constitution provides that each Local Union elects delegates to represent their local at the Convention. Notices of nominations and elections will be mailed to the members of each local indicating the meeting dates, times and locations, as well as the expected number of delegates to be elected.

Please be certain to check your mail carefully for your notice.







# Building Holiday MAGIC

Once again, we've helped a family in need realize the dream of home ownership.

Home 4 the Holidays has become an annual tradition for the Carpenters, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity St. Louis and KMOV Channel 4.

Unlike a typical build, Home 4 the Holidays moves on an accelerated schedule, getting a new house built from start to finish in just a few weeks. With a team of committed volunteers, the project gets finished and move-in ready just in time for the recipient family to spend their first Thanksgiving in their new home.

"A lot of people think this is a giveaway, but it's not," this year's homeowner Tanjinia said. "I presented Habitat with my income, my credit score and I've worked really hard for this. It's not a charity case."

Habitat homeowners spend at least 350 hours of "sweat equity" helping to build their home and receive assistance securing an affordable mortgage.

Statistics show that more than half of all St. Louis renters are paying above 30% of their income on rent, something government officials call "cost-burdened." Low-income renters often live in overcrowded, unhealthy, or even dangerous conditions. Habitat's St. Louis office gets about 5,000 calls a year from people looking to break free from the renting cycle and into their own low-cost house.

Tanjinia said she and her two sons had been split up, living with various relatives. Their new home in the city's Gravois Park neighborhood will finally allow them to live together as a family under one roof.



*Tanjinia works full-time as a billing clerk. She also works part-time doing home healthcare.*

*Becoming a mom as a teenager was definitely a challenge, but she still managed to overcome and accomplish her goals. Her 12-year-old is gifted in math and enjoys playing video games. He was an only child for ten years until his younger brother was born a year ago.*

*The three of them spend free time playing in the park, going out to dinner and to the movies.*

*As a child, Tanjinia was accustomed to moving around a lot, forcing her to make new friends almost every year. She is looking forward to having a home for her boys to grow up in, and knows this partnership with Habitat St. Louis is the key to giving them a chance at stability. Just days before Thanksgiving, Tanjinia received the keys to the home she helped build.*





# CONTRACTOR SPOTLIGHT

As one of the regional council's newest contractor partners, Amanda Parks, owner of **A1 Dock & Door**, looks forward to building a long and successful business.

## **Tell us about A1 Dock & Door.**

A1 Dock and Door is headquartered at 2779 Wilshire Valley Dr. St. Charles, MO. We have two employees for now, myself and Tracy Parks. We are looking to expand our business and add another two or three employees to our company in the very near future.

## **What type of carpentry do you do?**

A1 Dock and Door specializes in new, replacement and servicing of loading dock and door equipment. This includes dock levelers, lifts, truck restraints, high speed doors, sectional doors and rolling steel doors. As well as a preventative maintenance program.

We started our business with a goal Tracy set for himself years ago. And that was to own and operate his own business. I took the initiative to research the loading dock-and-door business in Jan. 2019. I created a plan of action and lined up all the necessary information to own and operate a small business. This included choosing and registering our business name, federal and state IDs, liability insurance, workman's comp, website and email addresses and necessary bank accounts. Not knowing how involved opening a small business could be, and having come from a background in the mortgage industry for 26 years, it was a bit overwhelming. However, I had a strong plan and the drive to see this dream come through for both of us.

We were given an opportunity/blessing to go forward and build our business in the middle of May 2019. This is when Tracy made a full commitment to transition from his former employer to devote 100% of his dedication to our company. He began reaching out to former

customers he built a relationship with throughout his 25+ years in the loading dock and door industry. He began scheduling preventative maintenance, repairs and new installs to begin June 1, 2019.

The overall support and response has been truly overwhelming, to say the least.

## **Where do you primarily do business?**

We primarily do business in the bi-state area.

## **How's business in the local market right now?**

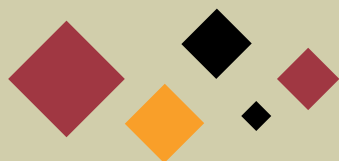
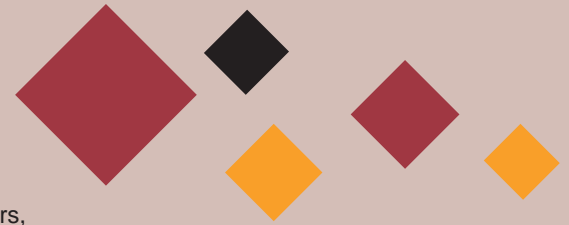
Business is very strong. Although it's only been seven months since we officially began, we have managed to maintain a steady flow of business. That in itself is truly rewarding.

## **How would you describe your company culture?**

Our company's culture is driven by dedication and teamwork. We take great pride in our services, quality of workmanship, safety and loyalty. We are dedicated to meeting our customers' needs and achieving our dreams and goals by working together as a team. I am actively seeking involvement into charitable organizations such as Make-A-Wish Foundation and Habitat for Humanity. We feel both those organizations represent a large part of who we are as individuals and by helping those in need.

## **Describe your relationship with the Carpenters union.**

Tracy has been in the Carpenters for over 30 years, so it just made sense to partner our business with the Carpenters union.







# BIG BASS Tournament

**May 2**  
**Lake of the Ozarks**

(314) 644.4800 ext.5227

- \$150 per boat (includes Big Bass)
- Refreshments after check-in
- Accommodations available @ Robin's Resort

## MOUSE RACES & Rodent Roulette



**Saturday**  
**March 21**

**Saturday**  
**Feb. 29**  
**7pm**

- \$25 (*advance tickets only*)
- Music & Dancing
- Beer, Setups, Snacks
- White Castle burgers

1-800-332-7188 ext. 5250



## Carpenters POKER night

- Doors open @ 6pm
- \$30 (\$25 retirees)
- Open to members, friends and signatory contractors

(314) 374.7594



**Registration Info**  
**[carpdc.org/Members/Discounts](http://carpdc.org/Members/Discounts)**

**or email: [info@carpdc.org](mailto:info@carpdc.org)**



Support these fun events benefiting the **Carpenters Scholarship Fund**





## IN MY WORDS

**Kathy Mays**

Local 315

I got tired of being broke and going paycheck to paycheck. I was an admitting clerk at Children's Mercy in Kansas City. JE Dunn was doing a facelift so I asked how to get in the trade. They were making a big deal to get more women in the trades.

A guy named Dave Shipley, and his wife, took me in and bought my first set of tools. It was *on* from there. He's retired now but he still checks in with me, and I still check in with him.

When my husband got sick, I was still able to keep the family going. His passing was devastating but I was able to maintain our household and we didn't go without. *If I wasn't a carpenter, I would've had to take three jobs to bring that much to the table.* And we wouldn't have had the insurance. It's awesome to just have that—to me, it's more valuable than the money.

I just love what I do. I've never had problems. I want to help bring more people in. The older you get, you want to bring others in to have the experience that I've had.

## Congrats New Grads

### Belleville Carpenters

Jack Bell  
Dustin Boner  
Thomas Goessling  
Amanda Graham  
David Meskil  
David Nicholas  
Zackary Sparks

### Kansas City Millwrights

Kevin Gillihan  
Bryan Spragg  
Trey Spragg

### Kansas City Carpenters

Chad Carter  
Ryan Closser  
Joshua Duffey  
Fracisco Ayala Felix, Jr.  
Rashaund Jackson  
Austin Jennings  
Jacob Johnston  
Keith Lucas

Joseph Lusby  
Eric McPherson  
Mason Murphy  
Montana Queen  
Dakota Price  
Jason Read  
Peter Stearns  
Clayton Taulbee



## In Memoriam

	Local		Local
James Blume (73)	2214	Bobby Monroe (85)	1596
Charles Bova (74)	1839	Ralph Orf (85)	32
Wayne Crum (84)		Donald Payne (70)	
Ronald Freihaut (61)		Roy Poertner (87)	92
Joseph Frisella (99)	97	Richard Quante (98)	1596
Ronald Gibson (85)	1795	Jerome Rose (91)	97
George Grateke (87)	97	Gary Schaefer (59)	
Richard Hessler (82)	1310	Arthur Schneider (75)	
John Hilliard (66)	1596	James Schomaker (79)	
Lawrence Hulsey (84)	97	Curtis Schroeder (76)	1310
Charles Jenkins (94)		R. Schroeder (84)	97
Clark Jordan (79)		William Thompson, Jr. (63)	1596
Robert Krause (85)		Ronald Tollefsrud (64)	97
Daniel Lakey (61)	32	James Valentine (72)	32
Thomas Luck (77)	97	August Wallendorf (63)	1008
Joseph Minor, Jr. (82)	662	Alvin Wittu, Jr. (59)	716
		James Wood (73)	

## Welcome New Contractors

Barclays Custom Carpentry, LLC • JRL Solutions, LLC • Boatright Built, LLC  
CA Construction Co., LLC • T&E Fabrication • Krista Howard Interiors, LLC



**St. Louis-Kansas City Carpenters Regional Council**  
**1401 Hampton Ave.**  
**St. Louis, MO 63139**

