

CRC

# CARPENTER

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

July/Aug 2021



**CONSTRUCTION  
CAMP  
PAGE 12**



We have all been through a lot—as tradespeople, as a union, and just as human beings trying to make sense of a global horror story come to life. We all want to do the right thing, make the right choices and keep ourselves and our families safe.

As we head into the heat of summer, a full year and a half since our world turned upside down, I want to take this time to remind you of the importance of continued vigilance against COVID-19. While many of our members and their families have already received vaccines, too many others have not.

The highly-contagious Delta variant is wreaking havoc and jeopardizing the recovery we have worked so hard to achieve. It is truly disappointing to know that Missouri now leads the U.S. in new coronavirus cases.

We are smarter than this. We must do better.

The United Brotherhood of Carpenters has been partnering with Made to Save, a national education campaign working to encourage COVID-19 vaccination. These are widely available across all three states in our region and I urge you to visit our

website to find out where you can obtain a vaccine: [carpdc.org/covid19](https://carpdc.org/covid19)

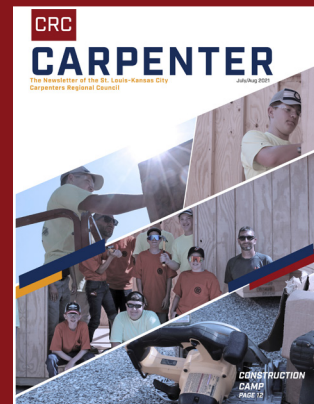
You can also search online at [vaccines.gov](https://vaccines.gov), text your zip code to 438829, or call 1-800-232-0233 to find your nearest location.

The longer we wait, the longer we'll be stuck in this pandemic and delay the return to normal we all want so badly.

That return will happen when more major projects are running full steam and generating good jobs. The new billion-dollar KCI airport renovation in Kansas City is one such project, creating a ton of man-hours and putting a lot of our people to work.

We also win more jobs when we are fully trained and certified in our trade. ICRA is an important certification that only union carpenters can claim. It allows us to work on healthcare construction sites, but only if we take the classes and keep our certifications up-to-date. Right now, many of our members are in danger of lapsing. You'll find out more about that too in this issue of the *CRC Carpenter*.

Thanks for reading and for staying informed on everything we're doing to build a strong, 21st century union.



## ON THE COVER

### Summer Fun at Construction Camp

(Pg. 12)

*The CRC Carpenter is a publication of the Carpenters Communications Department.*

*Editor: Matt Murphy*



STAY CONNECTED  
[carpdc.org](https://carpdc.org)



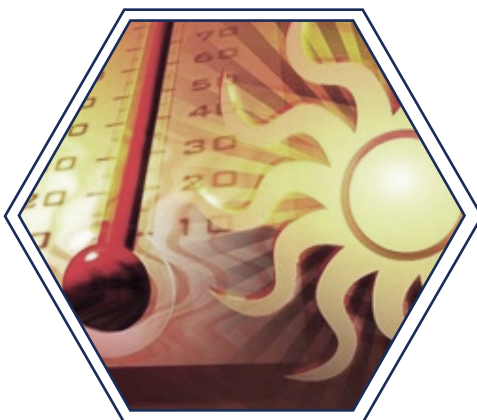


## MATERIALS SHORTAGE

A recent supply shortage of lumber and building material has led to a **300% price increase** from this same time last year. We're teaming up with the St. Louis Home Builders Association in requesting federal leaders to stop the prices from increasing further and ensure that new homes can still be built on budget. We've made much progress toward recovery, but it could be stalled if average Americans can't afford sky-high prices.

## STAY SAFE

We've been having record-breaking weather here in the Midwest this summer, with temps **topping 100 degrees** in many cities. Along with heat from the sun, other factors like asphalt, heavy equipment and power tools can also raise the thermometer on the job. We say this every year, but it's worth repeating—Water. Rest. Shade.



## STRONG SUPPORT

Public support for labor unions is up—even among Republicans. While a majority of Americans say they would vote for a union at work, **only 11%** currently belong to one, a symptom of laws in many states being stacked against organizing.

## Welcome New Contractors

Alltech Eng. Corp.  
Floorsite  
Freeciti Contracting  
Frontier Doors & Glass  
Impact Contracting  
J B Wilson  
JC's Drywall  
J Hasty Commercial Door  
Legacy Contracting  
Prodigy  
Steve Krekeler Carpentry  
Vault Construction  
Xtreme Turf



# LEVEL CARE IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS

**Buying power saves carpenters  
millions on prescription drugs**

In 2005, UBC General President Doug McCarron, created a coalition of regional Carpenters Health & Welfare Plans throughout the country to increase the collective buying power of our prescription drug benefits. The program launched on January 1, 2006.

Over the last 15 years, it has saved participating health and welfare plans approximately \$1 billion on prescription drugs and has helped provide a comprehensive pharmacy benefit for more than 500,000 UBC families.

In 2017, under the leadership of President McCarron and the UBC Steering Committee, the concept of creating our own specialty pharmacy was born. Specialty medications are extraordinarily high-cost and must be carefully managed to ensure seriously ill patients receive the best care at the lowest effective cost possible. The program envisioned was called Level Care Specialty Pharmacy.

Due to a very complex regulatory environment, the UBC worked with its plan experts over the next three years to set up both the Level Care Specialty Pharmacy and a larger Level Care Prescription Benefit Management (PBM) program. The entire program is now known simply as “Level Care.”

In 2020, Level Care finalized the program and launched in January of this year. The Level Care Specialty Pharmacy itself was built at the United Brotherhood of Carpenters International Training Center in Las Vegas, but due to its unique arrangement with its Express Scripts partner, it can dispense specialty medications at locations throughout the United States.

The new Level Care contract is projected to save UBC regional health plans more than \$362 million over the next five years. The St. Louis – Kansas City Carpenters Regional Health Plan is projected to save over \$30 million during that same period of time.



*General President Doug McCarron (right) honors Benefit Plans Administrator Ron Laudel, who has played an instrumental role in creating Level Care Specialty Pharmacy, saving UBC health plans more than \$350 million over the next five years.*





## WHAT DOES IT MEAN ?

Originally designed by the old National Union of Carpenters in 1864, today's emblem was officially adopted in 1884 by the delegates at the United Brotherhood of Carpenter's Fourth General Convention.

The UBC emblem serves as a symbol of the union's ideals.

While some of the tools depicted in the emblem are no longer common on job sites, all of the design elements and the values they represent remain vital to the Brotherhood

**Motto:** Inscribed in Latin, "Labor Omnia Vincit." It means "Labor Conquers All Things."

**Rule:** Signifies the UBC's commitment to live by the golden rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

**Compass:** Represents the union's commitment to the social, moral and intellectual well-being of its members.

**Jack Plane:** A tool emblematic of the trade.

**Colors:** Pale blue represents our ideas as pure, clean, and lofty as the skies. The dark red symbolizes the blood that flows through the veins of those whose labor is honorable.

**Shield, or base:** Indicates that those legally wearing the emblem are morally bound to safeguard and protect the interests of the organization and its members.

# ***“I couldn’t just let those people get hurt.”***

**A Kansas City Carpenter Interrupts an Armed Robbery and Almost Loses His Life. His Union Family is Helping Him Pick Up the Pieces.**

*Derek Winemiller has faced more than a year of recovery and physical therapy after being shot at least a dozen times.*



**W**hat does it mean to be a union brother or sister?

For Derek Winemiller (Local 315), it means doing what you can to make sure your fellow carpenters get home safe at the end of the day. “That’s what it comes down to, our number one job is making sure we all get back to the ones we love,” he explained.

In February 2020, the 40-year-old came frighteningly close to never seeing his loved ones again. That night in Kansas City, Winemiller stepped into the middle of an armed robbery in progress and was shot at least a dozen times. Doctors have never been able to determine just how many bullets entered his body (probably between 12 and 16.) He says he was trying to do the right thing. “I couldn’t just let those people get hurt.”

Immediately after the shooting, Winemiller couldn’t move, his spine badly swollen by a bullet graze. With the aid of an exoskeleton and a walker, he’s had to relearn how to move again.



Thanks to support from his local, his family and even strangers, Winemiller is recovering one step at a time. "I don't have a stop button. I don't know how to quit. As soon as the doctors told me that I could recover, that's where my focus has been," he said. "Every bit of what was taken from me, I am going to get back."

A good friend and union brother, Lou Tuck (Local 315), has collected thousands of dollars at local meetings and from fellow carpenters on the job where Winemiller had been working before the shooting. Tuck said members from other unions also stepped up with donations. Many of them had never even met Winemiller but were inspired by his story. His employer, McCown-Gordon, contributed as well, and promised to keep his job waiting for him once he's fully recovered.

Before joining the union, Winemiller was in the Army but was discharged after an accident during training. He recovered from his injuries and started working odd jobs to get by. That's when he talked to his father-in-law, John Gregory (Local 315), about professional carpentry. "I told him if he wants to be a union carpenter, 'you need to keep your mouth shut and your ears open,' and he did exactly that," Gregory said.

His son-in-law instantly showed a hard-work ethic, "He just wants to help everyone. You couldn't ask for a better brother, union member, or citizen."

While donations have helped the family with groceries and medical bills, additional assistance has poured in from the UBC's Helping Hands fund and a Kansas City-based nonprofit called Working Families' Friend (WFF). The group offers labor families services and financial help in times of need and our regional council has been a proud donor for years.

WFF president Joan Putthoff said her agency comes to the rescue for families that may not qualify for funding from other aid organizations. "These are people who have never asked for help before," she said.



"Everyone's story is different, and it's our number one priority to provide for them in times of emergency." Since its founding in 2003, WFF has donated more than \$284,000 to about 700 union carpenter families, and more than \$4 million in aid to others.

The regional council's apprenticeship program has also pitched in, retrofitting the family's porch to accommodate a wheelchair. "At the end of the day, I wish we could do even more for him," program director Kevin Wilcoxon said.

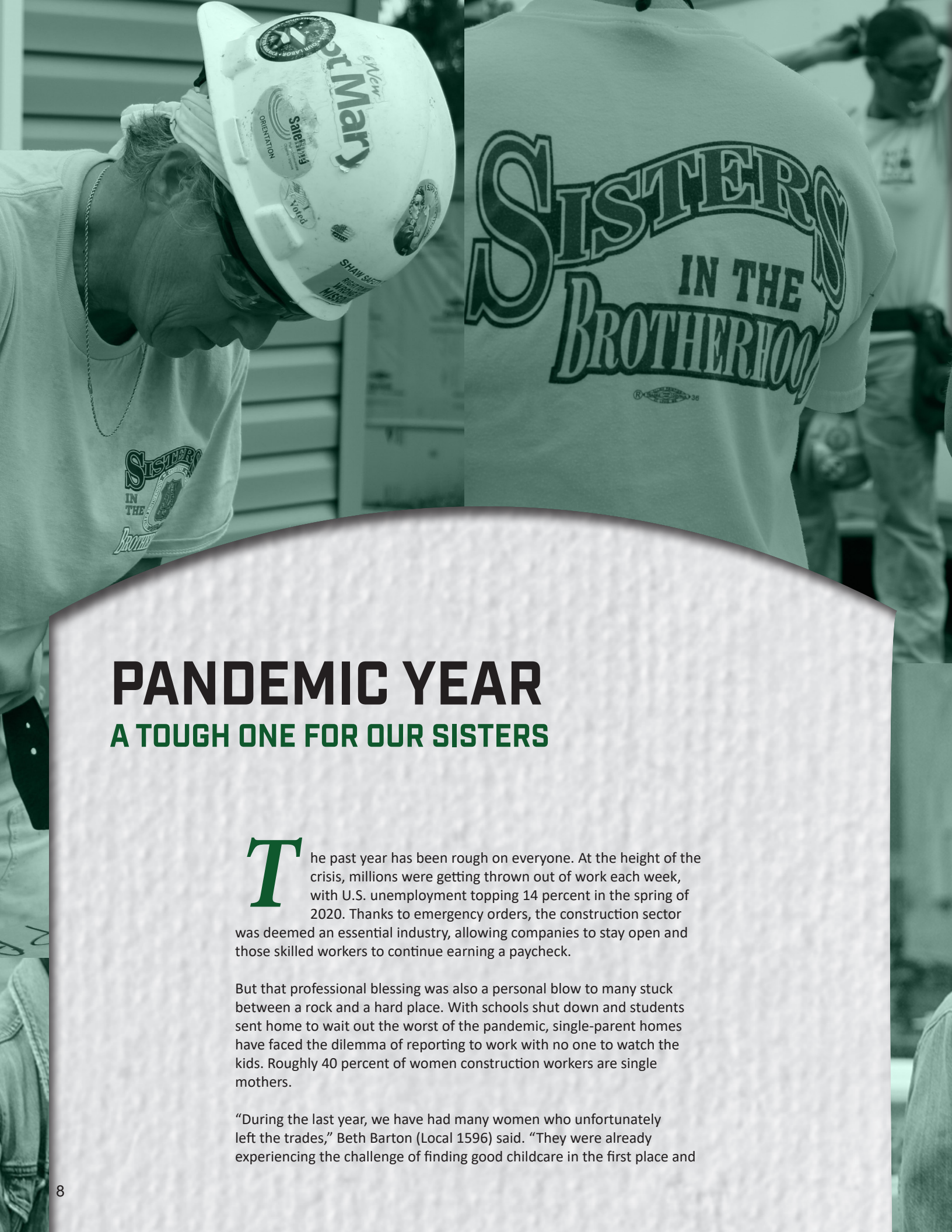
A year and a half since that horrific night, Winemiller is still drawing strength from his union brotherhood. "They continue to show up, they continue to check up on me and they still help my family," he said. "It would be easy to let me slip out, but I'm constantly reminded of the brotherhood."

Executive Secretary-Treasurer Al Bond said the brotherhood is a positive force that touches all union members. "Being a part of the brotherhood is knowing that there are brothers and sisters who are out there to support one another in times of need, building our communities and taking care of each other."

*Winemiller's home is now wheelchair accessible thanks to (L-R) Kevin Wilcoxon, Sam Wilcoxon, Brent Sanders, Keith Harris and Troy Jenkins.*







# PANDEMIC YEAR

## A TOUGH ONE FOR OUR SISTERS

**T**he past year has been rough on everyone. At the height of the crisis, millions were getting thrown out of work each week, with U.S. unemployment topping 14 percent in the spring of 2020. Thanks to emergency orders, the construction sector was deemed an essential industry, allowing companies to stay open and those skilled workers to continue earning a paycheck.

But that professional blessing was also a personal blow to many stuck between a rock and a hard place. With schools shut down and students sent home to wait out the worst of the pandemic, single-parent homes have faced the dilemma of reporting to work with no one to watch the kids. Roughly 40 percent of women construction workers are single mothers.

“During the last year, we have had many women who unfortunately left the trades,” Beth Barton (Local 1596) said. “They were already experiencing the challenge of finding good childcare in the first place and



# WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION JUGGLE FAMILY AND WORK DURING DIFFICULT YEAR.

now you add in COVID and the fear of what they could possibly bring home to their children. For many women, that was the straw that broke the camel's back."

As president of Missouri Women in the Trades (MOWIT), Barton is well-known in local construction as an advocate for our sisters and an organizer of the meetings and networking events that keep them connected. In May, a panel discussion streamed online allowed tradeswomen to share stories of how COVID has affected their work-life

## HARD CHOICES

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, five million women have left the workforce since the start of the COVID pandemic.

In what has been dubbed the "she-cession," many women lost jobs in female-dominated industries, like retail and food service.

Others, especially single mothers, gave up full-time work when schools and daycares shut down and children were stuck at home.

balance and what they have been doing this past year to stay in touch in a remote world.

MOWIT saw a dramatic drop in attendance at its regular meetings once they were forced to go virtual. Also lost was water cooler chatter, the kind of daily gatherings around a job site that can be an important outlet for passing on information and catching up with coworkers.

Since office hours have been reduced and personnel are working from home, employers and staff have had less direct contact and fewer opportunities to communicate.

Diana Wilhold, deputy executive director/COO of Construction Forum, an industry nonprofit focused on collaboration building and communication, said they have kept busy pushing out updates during the pandemic. "Because of our broad reach, union leaders, contractors, and owners asked us to help disseminate COVID information."

Construction Forum used a \$10,000 grant from the St. Louis Community Foundation to produce short video messages on COVID-related topics. The website has also been using podcasts and articles to discuss everything from mask and vaccine protocols, to dealing with mental health issues during the pandemic.

Wilhold said the unique needs of women in the industry is definitely something requiring attention.

"Some of the things that other industries have, the construction industry does not have. For example, we are a bit behind the curve on maternity leave. How do we retain and attract more women if they don't feel the industry supports them," Wilhold said.

Women from all occupations are starting to question the demands that their careers require. This past year of working from home has allowed more time with kids and family, and less time commuting to the job. Flexible work schedules are already launching at many companies.

Barton said that obviously won't apply to tradespeople, who can't work from home, but COVID has proved that technology can help in other important ways, like staying connected and supporting our brothers and sisters.

"I think it has provided a bit of a silver lining, allowing us to reach more women online who can't come to our meetings. But we still really love getting together in person and having that camaraderie of being women in the trades together."

# DON'T LOSE YOUR ICRA CERTIFICATION

To stay current, sign up for  
refresher courses starting in July.



If you've taken ICRA 24 in the last four years, it's time for your eight-hour refresher course—or face losing your certification.

The eight-hour Infection Control Risk Assessment (ICRA) Best Practices in Health Care Construction Refresher Course will renew certification for another four years, and allow certified members to be more employable, according to Scott Byrne, business representative and ICRA coordinator.

"This certification gives our members a leg up on our non-union competition," Byrne said.

At least 450 union members are at risk of losing their certs at the end of this year, if they don't complete this refresher. Text messages are going out to members whose certifications could lapse without the necessary safety training. With so many at risk of slipping through the cracks, Byrne said the CRC is setting up a phone bank, calling members with a reminder to sign up for the upcoming courses. If you receive a call, you'll be getting a confirmation email with further details about the class.

If a member does not take the required eight-hour safety training within the allotted time, he/she won't be able to work on ICRA

certification job sites and will have to take another 24-hour class to re-certify. ICRA certification may be required to work in many hospital/healthcare buildings, food distribution facilities, schools and other occupied spaces during renovation. The COVID-19 pandemic created a heightened awareness for job site safety and training.

Each of the classes at the St. Louis and Kansas City facilities are eight hours long and will be held in either two sessions from 5-9 p.m., or one session from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Members enrolled in the two-session course must attend both dates listed to fulfill their eight-hour requirement (class schedules can be found at: [carpdc.org/ICRA](http://carpdc.org/ICRA)).

In addition to the in-person course, the UBC offers an online, self-paced refresher through the International Training Center that will also satisfy the eight-hour safety mandate.

To find out more information on the UBC online ICRA refresher, go to the web address listed at the top of this page.







# OUT OF WORK LIST

## Need Help Finding Work? The UNION Has Your Back.

The Out of Work list is available to all union members currently looking for a job. Kansas City Business Representative David Wilson says the list is a valuable tool for the union when a job requires additional manpower.

“If our members want to go back to work and can’t find a job, we can find one for them,” Wilson said.

If you’re signing up for the first time, call the St. Louis office at **(314) 644-4800** or Kansas City office at **(816) 931-3414**.

The list showcases your skills to business agents, who can use their contacts to help you find work. You can update your information online after your profile has been created.

During the pandemic, some union members were not updating their information on the Out of Work list, which showed that manpower was lower than it actually was. Union members who are on the list need to update their information every week if they are still looking for work.

“

***If our members can't  
find a job, we can find  
one for them.***

”

Wilson says business agents are constantly tracking upcoming work and the list lets agents know how many jobs need to be filled. “It’s critical for members to sign onto the list when they’re not working, regardless of where they typically find jobs.”

Carpenter Jose Ruiz-Membreno (Local 315) was out of work, laid off because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ruiz-Membreno included in his profile that he had experience hanging drywall and was brought onto a jobsite after signing up on the list.

“It’s a good idea to let the union know when you’re out of work and need to find another job,” Ruiz-Membreno said.

The Out of Work list will be updated early next year to a new platform that will automatically show members’ previous work history. It will create a more accurate profile for agents to look at. In addition to updating the framework, business agents will be able to send out mass texts for jobs rather than having to make numerous, individual phone calls.



# HAPPY CAMPER

AS MOST KIDS HEAD TO THE POOLS AND AMUSEMENT PARKS, THESE HARD WORKING YOUNGSTERS FIND SUMMER FUN AT CONSTRUCTION CAMP.



Attracting more people into the construction trades is a challenge experts have been grappling with for a very long time.

The smart ones know that courting adults who may be looking for a career change is only one piece of the puzzle. The other, and equally urgent need, is reaching kids still in school with the message that building stuff can be fun. Construction camp is doing precisely that.

“What we’re finding is that a lot of them are interested in the technical aspects of construction but none of them have any actual building experience,” said Jason Jones, an instructor with the council’s Belleville training school, which is helping to staff a new camp for kids in Illinois.

“We’re teaching them how to lay out, how to use a hammer, a little bit about using the saws safely and what all the different PPE is for.”

The kids, ranging from 7th grade through high school, are all students in the Madison County, Illinois school district.





They signed up for a week of camp, which has them building an equipment shed that the county will use to store lawnmowers and tools.

## WORD OF MOUTH

Organizers had been in the planning stages of launching their first construction camp last year when coronavirus hit and plans got scrapped. Rachel Lewis, education coordinator for the Madison County Regional Office of Education, said vaccines and plummeting COVID cases convinced them to try it again this summer, but it all had to come together very quickly.

"We didn't want to spend money until we knew for sure it could happen. We had four weeks to coordinate all of this and the kids didn't have a lot of time to sign up," Lewis said.

Much of the advertising for the camp relied on word of mouth and the county is already getting calls from parents inquiring about next year because they missed the announcement.

Interest in these kinds of camps is likely being fueled by the unfortunate demise of what was once a staple in America's public schools: shop class. Generations of kids learned how to master tools, make basic home repairs, or even fix a car thanks to skills they learned in vocational education classes that used to be considered essential learning for America's youth. "There was a time when many of our Madison County high school districts offered more of these types of classes, but today there are only a few," Lewis said.

To fill the gap, kids who want to learn how to become more handy and self sufficient have to seek out-of-school learning programs, like construction camp. Many similar summertime workshops cater to inquisitive kids, offering expert instruction on everything from music and theater, to math and foreign languages.

The camp idea got started after a young student told his dad that he wasn't interested in attending sports



camp and wanted to know if there was a construction camp instead, said Rob Werden, superintendent for the Madison County Regional Schools. "The dad asked me if I would consider hosting one and I told him I sure would."

Kaleb Smith, director of the Madison County Career and Technical Education System, came through with a potential funding source and the office went to work organizing. "We had a great amount of support from our local trades, contractors, and industry. Once news spread about the camp, students and parents alike got excited and started registering. It's been a huge success and we are looking forward to continuing it next year and expanding the opportunity for even more students," Werden said.

Edwardsville High School student Brynn Gent joined the camp to get more hands-on lessons in something that has been a part of her family for as long as she can remember. "My dad works for a plumbing company and we have a shop in our basement. It's definitely something I've always been interested in. Even if it's not going to be my career, it can always be my hobby."

# WATCH



See More of Madison County's  
First Construction Camp on  
Our YouTube Channel.

TheCarpDC





# CONTRACTOR SPOTLIGHT

## PERNIKOFF CONSTRUCTION

Jeff Pernikoff

### How did your company get started?

My grandfather, Max Pernikoff started the business in 1914. He came to St. Louis from Russia to work as a carpenter at the 1904 World's Fair. The company has thrived under his son Irv, his two grandsons Mike and Jeff and his great-grandson Brett- 4th generation.

### What kind of work do you do?

We always have been a quality commercial contractor, building restaurants, healthcare/medical, office buildings, light industrial, schools and high-end residential. We perform rough and finish carpentry, drywall, acoustical and have our own small millwork shop. A lot of our work is repeat business and word of mouth and negotiated.

### Do you strive for a family-run atmosphere?

The family aspect is really important to us. We have employed several generations of carpenters through the years and their personalities and skills represent our family values, personality and work ethic.

### What does business look like right now?

With Covid, we have seen unparalleled growth in our residential division. Our high-end residential division has grown exponentially. Medical and retail have also seen steady growth. As long as materials are available and material costs go down, 2021, and into 2022, look quite great, up beat!

### How bad is the materials shortage?

Three weeks ago, I got a bid from a lumber yard. When we went to place the order at the end of last week, the price had gone up \$2,000. The wait times are extremely long too. I've been doing this for 40-plus years and never before have I had to put a clause in a contract that says if the price of material goes up, we cannot be held responsible.

### What's the biggest misconception about construction work?

That it is not a glamorous or sexy industry! There's nothing wrong with strapping on a tool belt and going to work every day. Ask one of our carpenters to do some math and geometry and you'll see that they're geniuses. They didn't learn it on a college campus, they learned it in the field. And the high-end finished product is a function of the construction workers' expertise and knowledge.

### Describe your relationship with the Carpenters union?

We don't hire for a specific project. We want people who will be with the company for a long time. That's why we don't differentiate between commercial and residential - we pay everyone a commercial wage. We've been affiliated with the Carpenters for a long, long time and we pride ourselves on always doing excellent work. That's a testament to our union carpenters. The client won't remember ABC Electric, or XYZ Plumber. It's Pernikoff Construction Company's name on this and we want to show that we've got the best skilled crew of carpenters and sub-contractors who represent our company.





## IN MY WORDS

**Gabriel**  
Denham  
Local 777

I've been a carpenter my whole life, that's my family's business. I joined the union 12 years ago because of the benefits and always being able to have steady work.

It's also nice to have our wages negotiated for us, I don't think the non-union labor force realizes that.

**I feel like being a carpenter, the work you do matters.**

Our carpenters are better trained, they're knowledgeable in their craft and the quality of help is just better.

I like working on the big projects that everyone sees, like the Legends in Kansas City, Kansas, and the new KCI terminal project. Those projects can really affect a lot of people, sometimes for years into the future. I like working on the projects that a lot of people use.

## Congrats New Grads

### KC CARPENTERS

Dustin Dukes  
Jacob Ebert  
Nick Highley  
Alexander Langer  
Darren Leader  
Charles Lowe  
Baron Schultheis  
John Sullivan

### KC MILLWRIGHTS

Joshua Cox  
Carl Kelley  
Josh Wollard

### ST. LOUIS CARPENTERS

Ryan Anderson	Kameron McGovern
Justin Beckmann	Bennan McHugh
Jeremy Bond	Cody Nueling
Charles Dale	Brandon O'Rourke
Kevin Day	Hershel Patterson III
Timothy Ferrante	Zachary Pietropinto
Quentin Gist	Troy Reifsteck
Jason Grabenhorst	Paul Schroeder
Joel Kauling	Cameron Sievers
Ryan Kelly	Rodney Taylor
Adam Kinney	Darris Williams
Jeffrey Long	Justin Wroblewski



## In Memoriam

	Local		
Gregory Arkers (55)	1529	Gregory Jones (56)	
Gregory Akers (57)		Richard Kitchen (86)	97
Marcel Bauman (78)		Joseph Krassinger (90)	97
Carl Bilbrey (84)	1596	Jarold Leonard (83)	97
James Bray (92)	315	Larry Lewis (81)	1839
James Brockett (60)		James Mager (95)	97
Timothy Brown (38)	662	Charles Miller (84)	1596
Phillip Bullin (90)	315	Bruce Nicolson (79)	97
Joseph Carver (73)	1596	Raymond Niel (93)	
Mike Childs (72)		Wilson Reed (73)	
Larry Cole (71)	716	Leroy Rosemann (84)	
William Cron (73)	662	John Schmid (79)	315
Timothy DeWit (68)		Timothy Stapleton (53)	
William Dill (77)	662	Ronald Steinbruegge (74)	
Theodore Eggering (73)	32	Lee Underwood (88)	1795
Carl Garrison (86)	1596	Charles Vollmer (53)	32
Richard Giancola (89)	1310	Dale Wethington (66)	32
William Griffey (63)	97	George Zahner (73)	110
Kenneth Immekus (74)		David Zinselmeier (84)	97

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



# CARPENTERS'

## UNION DAY AT THE BALLPARK

**CARDINALS vs DODGERS**

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6TH | 1:15PM GAME TIME

**\$37 LEFT FIELD LOGE TICKET INCLUDES:**

- ALL YOU CAN EAT BALLPARK BUFFET
- COMPLIMENTARY BEER AND SODA
- SOUVENIR CUP



**CARDINALS.COM/CARPENTERS**



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