



# THE ACT REPORT

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A PUBLICATION OF THE AFFILIATED CONSTRUCTION TRADES FOUNDATION

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## Officials Decide Workers' Organization 'Too Controversial'

### Clarksburg Italian Festival Says 'No' To ACT's \$15,000 Sponsorship Offer

Officials of Clarksburg's Italian Heritage Festival apparently have refused to accept ACT's offer to be a major sponsor of this year's event, reportedly because festival officials believe the building and construction trades foundation is "too controversial."

In rejecting ACT as a lead sponsor, festival officials also turned aside \$15,000 in building and construction trades members dues money which the ACT Board of Directors had voted to contribute to the project.

The Italian Heritage Festival in Clarksburg has been a major

West Virginia end-of-the-summer event since 1979.

Because it's so popular and well-attended, ACT decided it would also be a good place to get out the message on the value of workers who are members of building and construction trades unions.

ACT's offer to be a lead sponsor would have filled a huge gap in financing the event after K-Mart abandoned that role two years ago.

ACT's Executive Board decided to pick up the slack with \$15,000

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## Unskilled, Non-Union Labor Botches Job

### Upshur TJM Project 'Disaster'

The \$80 million orient strand board plant in Upshur County is turning out to be a disaster for owner Trus-Joist

MacMillan. The problem -- unskilled, out-of-state labor has botched the job, particularly the pipe welding.

According to first hand accounts a recent x-ray inspection of welds showed a 100 percent failure rate. GTS En-

ergy, the apparent general contractor, is searching for qualified welders and is finding out that only union affiliated workers can do the quality of work needed.

"It appears there may be a union contractor hired to go in and tear out some work that a non-union outfit did," said Bill Thomas, ACT's industrial representative.

"This hasn't been confirmed, but they are negotiating," he said.

A meeting was held the first week of May at the plant, between representatives of GTS, Union Boiler Company, Boilermakers Local 667, and Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 152 concerning the piping system at the plant.

According to sources, if the agreement is approved the current contractor, Mountaineer

Industrial Resources, will be replaced by a contractor signatory to Pipefitters Local 152. That contractor will be awarded the piping contract working under the terms and conditions of the locals 1993-

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FILMING THE STUDIO PORTION for ACT's "Pulp Fiction/Poison Promises" video are Hodding Carter, former aide to Pres. Jimmy Carter, Steve Burton, Tri-State Building Trades Council business manager, and ACT President Bruce Tarpley.

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# Sheet Metal District Joins ACT, 425 Members Added To Roster

ACT gained nearly 425 new members when one more district of Sheet Metal Workers Local 33 voted to join in late April.

Local 33 was created out of a merger of several locals in 1989.

Based in Cleveland, Ohio, most of West Virginia is covered by offices in Charleston, Clarksburg, Parkersburg and Martins Ferry, Ohio, but each local has its own bargaining and contracts.

All but the Ohio office covering the Wheeling area are now ACT members.

Harry Oiler, business representative of the Parkersburg local, said his local has a total of 421 members including the 230 active building and trades members who have joined ACT.

Oiler's local has territory which runs from the Ohio River

to the Virginia border, covering 24 counties in West Virginia and one in Ohio.

Oiler said he feels his members will be better represented on the whole by joining ACT because of its large number of members and financial power.

"Numbers make the difference nowadays with publicity and fighting the non-union element," he said.

"Personally, for the sheet metal workers, I thought it was time we started to pay our share," he said. "We're benefiting from ACT anyway -- you always do when there's a statewide organization like this.

"Our members now feel the same after they've seen what ACT has done. It hasn't turned things around directly for them yet, but it has helped when we have non-union contractors bidding on jobs."

Oiler said the best pro-union

comments he's heard in the last year have been about ACT's TV commercials.

"That's very positive for unions on the whole to let people know we're around and that we're helping them, not big business."

Being a part of a large organization like ACT will help his members, he said.

"Our members know they need more than our own little group, we need a concerted effort from all."

Kenneth Perdue, a business representative who takes care of the north central area of the Parkersburg district that covers Clarksburg, said his members joined ACT in hopes to gain work.

"We have concerns with various plants because of the non-union atmosphere so we hope not only to get more work but to hold onto work with

ACT," Perdue said.

He said ACT's work with the legislature is also a plus.

"It's good to have a hand in what's taking place on the state level that concerns the working man," he said. "ACT has made the building trades a

major player again."

However, advertising and public relations is the biggest single important issue - "to let the public know who we are and what unions are all about" - that ACT accomplishes, according to Perdue.

## Italian Festival

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in members' dues because the board believed the festival has a reputation of being a very positive, family-oriented event. Because of this, ACT's board felt the public exposure of building and construction trades workers as contributing members of the community would also be very positive.

Apparently officials of the Italian festival disagree. Seemingly they also rejected ACT's offer without even officially notifying ACT of the decision.

"Frankly we're shocked they don't want our money," said ACT Director Steve White.

"We didn't receive a written response but we heard they thought ACT was too controversial. It also be very positive.

"All we wanted to do was emphasize the positive role of construction workers in their communities. I really don't see

how that could be considered controversial."

One of ACT's major goals since its founding in late 1991 has been to inform the public about the many positive contributions union building and construction trades workers make in their communities.

"Union construction workers often volunteer on community projects," White said. "They invest in training programs that don't cost tax payers anything. They support decent wages and benefits which allow families to have a fair standard of living. As local citizens they pay taxes and spend their money in West Virginia."

"It's ironic the event is held on Labor Day but the sponsors don't want labor participation. ACT will not be a spoiler for this festival but we are concerned politics are taking it over. We often volunteer on commu-

## LOCALS WHICH MAKE UP ACT

With the addition of a second district of Sheet Metal Workers Local 33, ACT Membership has grown to include 29 local unions representing more than 11,000 building and construction trades workers. Following are the local unions which belong to ACT.

Boilermakers LU 667	Laborers LU 379*
Bricklayers LU 5	Laborers LU 984*
Bricklayers LU 9	Laborers LU 1085*
Bricklayers LU 15	Laborers LU 1149*
Carpenters LU 128	Millwrights LU 1755
Carpenters LU 302	Operating Eng. LU 132
Carpenters LU 899	Painters LU 1144
Carpenters LU 1207	Plumbers & Fitters LU 83
Cement Masons LU 887	Plumbers & Fitters LU 565
Cement Masons LU 181	Plumbers & Fitters LU 625
Iron Workers LU 301	Sheet Metal Workers LU 33
Iron Workers LU 769	(Charleston & Parkersburg Districts)
Laborers LU 453	Teamsters LU 175
Laborers LU 543	Teamsters LU 505
Laborers LU 1353	Teamsters LU 789

\* These Locals are in ACT under the Heavy & Highway Agreement only.

*Since 1987, volunteer building trades members have been working hard to help find a cure for diabetes.*

*To date, over \$8.8 million has been raised for Dollars Against Diabetes, which has come to be known as DAD's Day.*

*Please support DAD's Day in your community this Father's Day Weekend, June 16-18. Contact your local Building & Construction Trades Council to see what event they are sponsoring, and help fight diabetes.*

# ACT Member Bikes For Lung Association

How much would you give to see a Pipefitter ride 100 miles on a bicycle?

John Earl, a member of Parkersburg Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 565, has raised money for the American Lung Association of West Virginia by riding his mountain bike for the last two years.

And Earl plans to make another go of it this year.

The Greenbrier River Trail Bike Trek will be held this

year May 19-21, and Earl hopes to complete the 100-mile trail and then some.

"The last two years the trail was 90 miles," Earl said. "This year they've upped it 10 miles for a total of 100, but I rode 124 miles last year anyway."

The first year he participated, Earl raised around \$300 for the local charity, and last year he raised close to \$400.

"So often when you raise money for an organization, a

big percentage goes into someone else's pocket, but this money is raised for the American Lung Association of West Virginia, so it stays here."

Earl said he thinks union members are more involved in the community than the public is aware of.

"That's one thing I really feel strongly about -- the public needs to be aware of how much union members contribute to our communities.

Often, they just don't know about good things we do -- they just think of unions as being on strike. But we do a lot of good things too," he said.

"That's one thing that ACT does real well -- gets the good word out about unions."

John Miller, business agent for local 565, agrees, and encourages his members to work in the community.

"We have several members involved in Partners in Education," Miller said, "where they go to local schools and give talks about how the labor movement evolved and is an important part of the economy."

Miller said not only is the participation important, but letting people know about it as well.

Call John Earl at (304) 485-8416 if you would like to sponsor him.



ON A BRIDGE OVER THE GREENBRIER RIVER is John Earl, a member of Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 565. Earl rides a mountain bike to raise money for the American Lung Association of West Virginia.

## Change Orders Skyrocket DEP Contract Up \$8 Million

ACT's northern representative has discovered a \$2 million contract has turned into a \$10 to \$15 million contract, apparently all behind closed doors.

Steve Montoney, ACT's northern representative, found out the West Virginia Division of Environmental Protection (DEP) had approved huge contract increases in its project to move tires from Shorty's Tire and Inwood Tire in Grant county to a landfill in Tucker county.

Montoney and Pauline Hanson, ACT's research analyst, investigated the landfill project for several months.

"We placed an ad in a local newspaper to see if any workers were not being paid prevailing wage, and we got a response from a couple of the truck drivers," Montoney said.

The two then began investigating the tire dump/landfill paper trail.

Hanson said the state's original contract with Madison Coal & Supply required the company to cut and grind up the tires.

DEP modified that contract in December to eliminate that provision. DEP considered

the modification a minor change in the permit, so no public notice, comment period or hearings were required.

About 20,000 tons of tires were expected to be removed from Shorty's, for a final cost of about \$2.4 million, according to the state contract.

"But then they changed it to an open ended contract," Hanson said.

"It may already have cost the state close to \$15 million."

Montoney questioned DEP Director Dave Callaghan about why DEP is paying for the tire pile clean up with millions of dollars from an account intended to help fund the closing of small, environmentally unsound landfills.

"We really didn't get any straight answers," Montoney said.

### The ACT Report

A monthly publication of the Affiliated Construction Trades Foundation, an association of West Virginia building and construction trades local unions, with offices in Charleston and Clarksburg.

Officers: Bruce Tarpley, President; Dave McComas, Vice President; Willard "Bubby" Casto, Financial Secretary; Roy Smith, Executive Director; Steve White, Director.

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## TJM Piping May Be Replaced By Union

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96 agreement.

According to Charlie Jordan, Business Manager for the Pipefitters, it is very difficult to come into a job at this stage. Jordan is insisting that all current work installed be taken down and if possible reworked. He has also insisted the performing contractor will assign any work under this agreement to the proper craft.

"We're very pleased with this progress on the TJM project," Thomas said. "Even if the negotiations do not go through, it is still a step forward that the company met with union officials."

Thomas said the project had been the target of both the ACT Foundation, the North Central Building Trades and the Boilermakers Fight Back organizing campaign.

Steve Montoney, ACT's Northern Representative has battled with the Upshur County Development Authority officials for months. Montoney has been unrelenting in his demand that the development authority help local construction workers gain employment at the project.

The development authority has blocked all attempts made by local workers to apply for

or be hired on the job.

To prove their point a number of union workers have tried to apply for jobs at the site with no success.

In January and February unfair labor practice charges were filed with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) over illegal hiring practices at the site. Various unions alleged members were discriminated against by con-

tractors and other project participants. The NLRB is investigating these charges.

"In their zeal to avoid local skilled workers, TJM, with the help of Frank Moots from the development authority, has turned this project into a nightmare," said Montoney. "Millions of dollars of local tax dollars are invested in this, but who is out there guarding our investment? Nobody."

# County Commission Jobs Act Approval Sought By ACT Legislative Committees

ACT Legislative Committees are covering the state, working toward getting the West Virginia Jobs Act passed before the next legislative session has even started.

B.B. Smith, ACT's legislative representative, said the committees hope to visit a majority of county commissions in the state to get approval for a resolution supporting the Jobs Act.

So far, they have accomplished that goal in three counties in less than a month of trying.

"We're really pleased with the progress our committees have seen so far," Smith said.

The resolution was passed in Wood, Wetzel and Marshall Counties. However, commissioners in Jackson County defeated the measure.

In each instance, members who live in the counties and are also committee members called on the county commissions.

"We are going to these county commission meetings with people from each county -- people who represent ACT as well as voters from those counties," Smith explained. "They are instrumental in getting the resolution passed in all of the counties."

Darrell Nonamaker and Bevin Seaman of Carpenters Local 899, and Dan Polling of Painters Local 1144 attended the Wood County Commission meeting, Denny Longwell and Donny Blatt, members of the Marshall, Wetzel, and Tyler Labor Council attended Wetzel County Commission meeting, and Bo Means of Operating Engineers Local 132 attended the Marshall county meeting.

The West Virginia Jobs Act requires 90 percent local workers be hired on tax funded or assisted construction projects.

Introduced in the last legislative session the bill was killed in the Senate by Sen. Bill Sharpe, D-Lewis. In the House the bill passed through the judiciary committee only to be derailed by the Chamber of

Commerce and the Contractors Association of West Virginia.

Smith said that while he wasn't surprised that the resolution is passing easily, it is going a lot better than he had

hoped.

"The only question that the commissioners have had was whether or not it is a union/non-union issue. They were assured that it deals strictly with hiring West Virginia

workers," he said.

"Our members are doing a really good job. Now all we need is for more of the membership to join the legislative committees and help us cover the rest of the state."

## Experiment Aimed At Reaching Workers

# ACT Advertising Off To The Races

ACT is off to the races in a new effort to get out the message about building and construction trades workers.

ACT was approached by Steve Midkiff, former organizer for the Charleston Building Trades on the Brown & Root campaign, and his brother Randy, member of Painters Local 970, to sponsor their race car.

ACT chose to sponsor Midkiff because of his successes last season, the growing numbers of spectators for local racing, the number of race tracks across the state and the belief that racing is a 'working mans' event.

"We spend the biggest part of our budget on advertising,"

said Steve White, ACT director.

"We wanted to try some-

thing different than a TV commercial and trying new things."

ACT committed an initial

"There must be numbers behind the proposal that show the public is watching, the event should be regional or statewide, the proposal must show prior experience in their event, and the exposure for ACT has to be significant."

There have been a few complaints about ACT getting involved in racing events but once it is explained that this about advertising members usually agree.

ACT has received sponsorship requests in the past and has decided to move forward slowly taking a cautious approach to new advertising ideas.

"We are trying some-

thing new and people don't always understand," said Bill Thomas, ACT's Industrial Representative.

"As long as we are getting out a positive message about union construction workers to our fellow West Virginians we are getting the job done."

Watch for the ACT car in West Virginia at the Ona, Ripley and Mineral Wells tracks, as well as the tracks in Stuart and Benton, Ohio and Olive Hill, Kentucky.

For more information about sponsorships contact Steve White at the ACT office in Charleston.



WATCH FOR THE 'ACT CAR' AT WEST VIRGINIA TRACKS.

That's what ACT is about ad-


\$1000 for the ACT logo to be placed on the car for five days of racing.

If the board feels it is successful then additional money will be spent to run more races.

There has already been a tremendous response from ACT members to the sponsorship.

Many are racing fans and are happy to see ACT get involved. Some are looking for sponsorship for their cars or other activities they are in.

"We will look at all requests for sponsorship, as long as it makes good advertising sense," said White.

  
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