

# THE ACT REPORT

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The ACT Foundation is a division of The West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades Council. Steve Burton, President; Roy Smith, Secretary-Treasurer; Steve White, Director.

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# Helmets-to-Hardhats Apprenticeship at work for Boilermakers Local 667

**T**wenty one new apprentices were welcomed into the Boilermakers' program through the Helmets-to-Hardhats initiative of the National Building Trades.

On November 1 a ceremony was held at Local 667's union hall and training site in Winfield to indenture the new apprentices.

On hand was a number of dignitaries including Governor Joe Manchin and Tom Householder of American Electric Power Company.

Both spoke about the billions of dollars in power house work to be done in the state and the need for skilled, reliable manpower to get the job done.

Sean Murphy, International Vice President for the Boilermakers, was also on hand and was Master of Ceremonies for the event.

"It's a win-win situation for us," explained George Pinkerman, Business Manager for Local 667. "We are getting some excellent apprentices that know how to take orders and are willing and able to do the work."

The Boilermakers' apprenticeship program is administered from

their Kansas City Missouri headquarters. But the training is done at Local 667's site.

Currently there are 101 apprentices in the four year program.

The Helmet-to-Hardhat's program was set up by the National Building Trades to assist those who are leaving military service

find a career in the construction trades.

"The Boilermakers have gone above and beyond to assist veterans in finding quality careers," said Helmets-to-Hardhats Executive Director and retired Marine Corps Major General Matt Caulfield.



ALL 21 NEW HELMET-TO-HARDHAT Boiler maker apprentices were on hand for the ceremony held at Local 667's headquarters.

# Three WV Windmill Projects Planned

**T**hree West Virginia windmill development projects have made the news recently.

All together the projects, in Grant, Pendleton and Greenbrier Counties represent about 325 windmills, \$750 million in investment and hundreds of construction jobs.

In Grant County a developer called NedPower sold their 150 windmill project last July to Shell WindEnergy Inc, a subsidiary of energy giant Royal Dutch Shell PLC.

The state Public Service Commission (PSC) had ap-

proved the project in April of 2003.

NedPower and the North Cen-

built and included language to transfer the hiring agreement to any new owner.

and the Council."

The 300 megawatt project will be Shell's first windmill venture west of the Mississippi, they currently own portions of seven wind projects.

Developer U.S. Wind Force, which also has an agreement with the Building Trades, file their application for a certificate with the PSC on November 3 to build 50 windmills in Pocahontas County.

The project called Liberty Gap Wind Force would install the windmills on Jack Mountain in Pendleton County.

The turbines will generate 125 megawatts of electricity.

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**"SWEI, AS THE NEW OWNER OF NEDPOWER, INTENDS TO HONOR THE MEMORANDUM AGREEMENT BETWEEN NEDPOWER AND THE COUNCIL." FILING BY SHELL WINDENERGY AT PSC**

tral West Virginia Building Trades signed an agreement in 2002 committing the project contractors to hiring local union workers.

The agreement anticipated the project might be sold before it was

In an October 31 filing with the PSC, Shell WindEnergy Inc., (SWEI) wrote, "SWEI, as the new owner of NedPower, intends to honor the Memorandum Agreement between NedPower

# Kenny Perdue Elected WV AFL-CIO President

**Kenny Perdue was elected as President of the WV AFL-CIO during the groups convention on October 28.**

Perdue, a member of Sheet Metal Workers Local 33, was challenged by Steve Cook, a former state legislator and business agent for the Laborer's industrial and public employee local.

At the end of the night the vote result was 23,792 for Perdue and 13,747 for Cook.

Larry Matheney ran unopposed for the position of Secretary Treasurer.

Both Perdue and Matheney had been appointed to their positions by the WV AFL-CIO executive board after former president Jim Bowen retired last year.

All four Building Trades Vice-Presidents, (Dan Poling, Painters; Gary Tillis, Laborers; Steve

Burton, Asbestos Workers; and Ronnie Burdette, Operating Engineers), were re-elected.

The only contested Vice-President race was in the Third Congressional District.

Tim Dean of the Steelworkers failed in his bid for re-election and was replaced by Jim Gardner of the Postal Workers.

Vice-Presidents are elected by district caucuses, the districts follow federal congressional lines.

The convention also reviewed legislative resolutions and passed the four proposals of the State Building Trades.

The resolutions asked for support to renew the West Virginia Jobs Act, help the state department of labor get more staff, encourage the legislature to study how much the underground economy is costing tax payers, and to support passage of legislation to require public works contractors to provide

health care to their work force.

"We are proud to have Kenny Perdue as president of the WV

AFL-CIO," said Roy Smith, Secretary-Treasurer of the WV State Building Trades.

"He is the first member of the Building Trades to hold that position."



*FORMER WV AFL-CIO PRESIDENT Jim Bowen swears in the newly elected President, Secretary-Treasurer and Vice-Presidents (from right) Steve Burton, Dan Doyle, Kenny Perdue, Larry Matheney, Jim Gardner, Dan Poling, Joe Carter, Kris Lundberg, and Elaine Harris. (Not pictured - Ronnie Burdette, Gary Tillis, Bob Brown, Randy Moore, Jim Ferguson and Linda Dickey.)*

## Davis-Bacon Reinstated in Gulf

**President Bush has revoked his proclamation that eliminated Davis-Bacon coverage for hurricane relief efforts in the Gulf Coast.**

The change came after an uproar from organized labor, and both democratic and republican legislators.

In September Bush announced he was cancelling Davis-Bacon protection for the Gulf Coast effort to "save money." But the promise of savings disappeared as many no-bid contracts granted have come under criticism for wasting tax dollars.

It was soon realized that cutting construction workers wages, some already as low as \$6 per hour, was not a very popular, or efficient way to take care of business.

Skilled manpower shortages were predicted and many local workers and contractors had complained they were being replaced by cheap imported labor.

Both democrats and republicans worked to restore the community wage protections.

The reinstated wage requirements went into effect on November 7 for new contracts. However, existing contracts without the wage protections will remain in effect.

## Federal Report Faults DOL On Apprentices Oversight

**The federal Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a report critical of the U.S. Department of Labor's oversight of apprenticeship programs.**

The report, issued in September, was especially critical of the poor performance of nonunion programs.

Nonunion programs had only a 30 percent graduation rate among apprentices, much lower than union programs.

And union apprentices earned 24 percent more than their non-union counterparts when they be-

gan their training and 36 percent more when they finish their program.

The GAO specifically criticized the DOL for not conducting more quality reviews of existing programs.

The report stated, "Although Labor collects information to compute completion rates and tracks participants who do not complete programs in the time expected, it does not use these data to focus its oversight efforts on programs with poor performance."

In West Virginia the anti-worker Associated Builders and Contractors Association of WV operated an apprenticeship pro-

gram for more than ten years and only graduated a few apprentices.

The program was disbanded earlier this year after the ACT Foundation uncovered a series of state grants that were not properly accounted for.

In Kentucky an ABC Training program affiliated with Decker College is under investigation.

On October 17, 2005 agents from the FBI and the Inspector General's Office of the U.S. Department of Education seized records and computers from Decker as part of a investigation into possible federal fraud.

The complete report can be found at the National Building Trades web site [www.bctd.org](http://www.bctd.org).

## SUPREME COURT TURNS DOWN PROPERTY TAX APPEAL

# Longview Submits Final Application

**T**he final application to the state Public Service Commission has been sent in by the developers of the Longview coal-fired power project.

The application details how the transmission lines will run from the \$1 billion power plant to the electric grid controlled by Allegheny Power.

Longview and Allegheny have been fighting over the route and cost of the transmission portion of the project.

In the end Longview found an alternate route to avoid Allegheny property.

The new route will mean Longview has to build a new \$9

million sub-station in Pennsylvania, but they no longer need to get Allegheny's agreement on the location or price for tying in to their power lines.

The PSC will now review the application, and some outstanding issues regarding noise and financial viability that remain from their permit already issued for the plant.

In August of 2004 the PSC granted conditional approval of Longview's siting certificate.

Another positive event happened in early November when the state Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal brought by

protestors about the property tax deal made between Longview and Monongalia County.

nied by the Circuit Court of Kanawha Court.

That leaves only this last permit with the PSC, and the likely permit challenge to the state Supreme Court, before all legal and permitting issues are resolved.

Longview has asked the PSC for an expedited process rather than the 300 day maximum under current law.

The State Building Trades has also entered into the case and asked for the process to move quickly.

"We can see some light at the end of this tunnel," said Natalie

Stone, Executive Secretary of the North Central WV Building Trades Council.

"We continue to have a great working relationship with Longview and value the partnership we have."

The project has been under development for more than five years.

The general contractor for the project is reported to be a joint venture between national construction giant Bechtel Corporation and Hitachi Construction Equipment.

Longview has said they are well on the way to putting together their wholesale electric customers and project financing to complete the development stage of the project.

**"WE CAN SEE SOME LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL," NATALIE STONE, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, NORTH CENTRAL WV BUILDING TRADES COUNCIL**

The tax deal provides for \$105 million over the 30 year agreement making Longview the number one taxpayer in the county.

Nevertheless some local citizens challenge the deal to stop the project.

Also last month an appeal of Longview's air permit was de-

## Operators Taking Applications For Apprenticeships

**T**he apprenticeship program of Operating Engineers Local 132 is taking applications from December 5 through 16.

The apprenticeship opportunity is for Heavy Duty Equipment Operators. Applications can be found at any state unemployment office from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

The three year program will include on the job training and at least 144 hours per year instruction at the Operating Engineers training center in Jackson County off Route I-77.

Applicants must be at least 18

years old, have a high school diploma or GED and be physically capable of performing the work of the trade.

Applicants must also have a valid drivers license and be residents of West Virginia for at least one year.

An aptitude test and drug test will be required.

As in all federally registered apprenticeship programs, 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 the 304/273-4852.

### Carpenters Picket Morgantown Hotel Project



MANNING THE PICKET line in Morgantown against VIC of WV are members of the Carpenters Union (from left) Joe Murphy, Victor Friend, Tyler Friend, Mike Jenkins, Leroy Stanley and Keith Williams.

General contractor VIC, from Fayetteville, is building a \$9.2 million Residence Inn by Marriott.

The Carpenters have filed Unfair Labor Practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board against VIC.

# Electrical Workers Strike at Monarch

**N**onunion electrical workers for Monarch Service Corporation went on strike November 1 to get union recognition.

The action took place at Logan's Roadhouse restaurant being built in Beckley.

Three of Monarch's seven electricians participated in the walkout.

Later in the week the workers offered to return to work but were refused by one of the owners, Dave Lewis.

Lewis told his employees they had been replaced and were no

longer needed.

According to Bert McDermitt, Business Representative for IBEW Local 466 the three workers were hired on a union job the very next day.

The latest activity at Monarch is part of a long effort by IBEW Local 466 to organize the company.

An election was held in April 2002, after an intense anti-union campaign was waged by Monarch. Nevertheless, the vote for

**"THERE ARE BASIC ISSUES ABOUT FAIRNESS THESE EMPLOYEES WANT RESOLVED." BERT McDERMITT, BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE FOR IBEW LOCAL 466**

union representation was unanimous.

But a union agreement was never reached in part because Monarch stopped getting work forcing employees to go elsewhere for full time employment.

At that time the average Monarch worker made around \$10 per hour without health or

pension benefits.

This time around Monarch was paying closer to \$16 per hour and offered a 401K pension and Individual (not family) health benefits.

"In some ways we made progress because Monarch was forced to close the gap, paying more per hour and offering benefits," said McDermitt.

But McDermitt believes more than pay and benefits were at issue.

"There are basic issues about fairness these employees want resolved."



MONARCH WORKERS ARE joined by local union members in support of a union contract. The picket is in front of the Logan's Roadhouse restaurant being built in Beckley.

## Windmill

*CONTINUED FROM P. 1*

This is the second project for U.S. Wind Force in West Virginia. The first was a 166 turbine project at a site near Mount Storm. The PSC approved the project in 2003 but it has not yet been built.

A Chicago based company,

Invenergy LLC, recently filed at the PSC for permission to build up to 124 windmills in Greenbrier County.

The windmills would create up to 186 megawatts of electricity and are estimated to cost approximately \$300 million.

Most of the windmills will be located on land owned by the forest industry company MeadWestvaco.

According to developers the project, named Beech Ridge Wind Farm, would take eight months to build and create 200 construction jobs.

Talks are currently underway between Invenergy and the Charleston Building Trades Council regarding a local hiring agreement similar to ones other wind power developers have signed.

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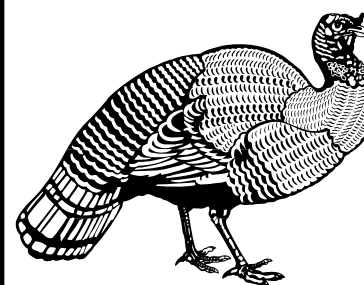
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## Happy Thanksgiving



From the  
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Building Trades  
and  
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