

**Nov 2016**

### From the President

*-James Shoemaker, Jr.*

Hello. I hope all had a wonderful Thanksgiving. I know that our CMMA organization has much to be thankful for! Our membership has grown by over 50% and we have teamed up with 7 Premier Sponsors. Most of this success is directly associated with bringing Harry Leaver on board as our Director. Harry and the board's hard work has certainly paid off.

In talking to our members and to other manufacturing groups within the state, what distinguishes the CMMA from the other organizations is our Special Interest Group (SIG) process. Here, members gather frequently to share best practices with each other, arrange for subject matter training (at great savings), arrange for consulting, and many other cost-shared/saving activities. Because of the work our SIGs have done over the past 4 years, our member companies are more enlightened and have saved many thousands of dollars.



We are in the process of launching 2 new SIGs: the Accounting SIG and the Supply Chain SIG. To date only 6 folks have expressed an interest in participating on these new SIGs. Each SIG needs a minimum of 5 participants to function. Imagine having a trusted group of local business people you can go to with questions such as:

- How to set-up a vendor rating system?
- How to set-up a vendor consignment program?
- Best way to determine cost of quality?
- How to account for scrap in your cost?

Answers to these types of questions is what a SIG provides to our member companies. Participation on a SIG is a win-win proposition for the participating company and for the employee representative who gets to know, and learn, from other manufacturers who share in the same challenges and opportunities.

Your CMMA has built a foundation which allows members to improve and save money, if they chose to participate. Participation on a SIG is a small investment which offers a great return. Please contact Harry or the CMMA Administrator in order to volunteer to participate on one of our existing SIGs or on one of our new SIGs . Remember - *Business is easier when we work together.*"

Have a wonderful Holliday!

James W. Shoemaker, Jr.

President

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

**Supervisor's Role in Safety & Health Training**  
Mt. Pleasant  
*Morey Tech Center*  
*Mid Mich Comm Col*  
**December 14**

**Supervisor Skills Training**  
Mt. Pleasant  
*Morey Tech Center*  
*Mid Mich Comm Col*  
**January—February**

**Associate Members Expo**  
Mt. Pleasant  
*Buck's Run*  
**February 22**

## From the Executive Director

*-Harry Leaver*

You may have noticed a few changes in this, our 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the CMMA newsletter. In case you didn't, we've added small advertisements in the left hand column accompanied by relevant articles. What's this all about?

It's simple. The CMMA needs to create a sustainable business plan. When I was brought on as executive director, two goals were highlighted as critical priorities: Boosting membership and creating a sustainable business plan. At that time we purged our membership database and determined we had 46 active member businesses. We set a goal to grow that number to 100 in a three-year time window. We are well on our way, having 73 members today, with many small manufacturers, some mid to large ones, and a variety of associate members.



From a financial perspective membership dues today generate less than \$30,000 annually. When we all celebrate that we have hit the milestone of 100 members, we cannot lose sight of the fact we will only be bringing in about \$40,000 in dues revenues per year. The harsh reality is it costs about \$100,000 to operate the CMMA annually, an amount likely to go up in the future as we introduce more programs, member benefits and services.

So what does this sustainable plan look like? Well....we don't have it all figured out yet but we have taken the first step and are planning our subsequent ones.

The first order of business was to approach some of our associate members about becoming Premier Sponsors. We are blessed in that our associate members recognize the importance of a strong manufacturing base within mid-Michigan and have graciously stepped up to make financial commitments in support of the CMMA. Before we contacted any of these members we determined a financial goal for the year. Our commitment to each associate member was to only pursue those with a current membership until we met our goal. The approach was to limit the number of premier sponsors to make it a prestigious recognition. In answer to associate members who may be asking why we didn't talk to you about this program, our thinking was to look to associates who have been the most engaged with our organization or have come to us asking about ways to be more involved and supportive. We also identified that we wanted only one member in any particular industry sector. Each of our premier sponsors recognize their contribution is for a one-year time window, and will have "first right of refusal" at renewal time. When openings come up we will look to another member in that sector.

As an example, Isabella Bank sponsored our "Town Hall" meeting last February, and has also asked about other ways they can support the CMMA. They have been and continue to be our most actively engaged bank. When we began considering the premier sponsor concept, Isabella Bank was the first member we approached, and they embraced it enthusiastically.

Therefore, as you look at this newsletter and all future ones, you will see small advertisements from our Premier Sponsors. Also included will be occasional articles from some of them with information that is relevant and important to each of you. Finally, we will highlight these premier sponsors at the bottom of every e-mail we send out.

We ask that you join us in thanking these premier sponsors for their financial support of the CMMA as they allow us to grow and better serve all of you.

Regards,

Harry Leaver

## Premier Sponsors

Platinum



Platinum



Platinum



Platinum



Gold



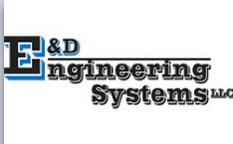
Gold



Silver



## Gladwin Block Party—September 15th



## Midland Best Practices Tour—November 10th



## Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

### Education SIG

This group is co-chaired by Bill Henderson and Dawn Thomas.

The CMMA Education Special Interest Group meets monthly, averaging 25 attendees, including representatives from manufacturing firms, Mid-Michigan Community College, and CMU. District and RESD superintendents, together with economic development personnel round out the list.

The vision of the group is to support Central Michigan Industries by consistently and effectively informing and engaging our youth, their parents, and educators in promoting skilled trades career opportunities available in the Central Michigan region.

#### Current projects:

Rotating industry tours/open houses: Aircraft Precision and Anchor Danly provided tours for 62 Career Technical Education students on Manufacturing Day on October 7<sup>th</sup>. Avalon/Tahoe will host a career night in January/February, J. Ranck Electric will once again hold a career event in March. The G-I Tech Mt. Pleasant Campus will feature a career fair, with area manufacturers highlighting career opportunities, in the spring.

Junior Achievement: Industry participation continues with this program, with Aircraft Precision and Merrill Institute providing programs at Alma Middle School.

CTE/Co-Op Job Placement: Ed Hubbel, principal of Clare High School, discussed the pilot rotating co-op program currently being run from his school. The SIG is working to implement a similar program RESD-wide in Gratiot and Isabella counties. The Gratiot Isabella Technical Center hosted a Work-Based Learning workshop at Winding Brook Conference Center on October 28<sup>th</sup>.

MMCC Pre-Apprenticeship Program: Working with MMCC personnel to refine curriculum for a post high school/dual enrollment program that would serve as an entry point for a regional apprenticeship program. Implementation is targeted for fall of 2017.

Eighth Grade Orientation Career Fair: The SIG will identify and recruit manufacturers to attend local eighth grade orientation sessions, as a way of increasing the visibility of manufacturing to students and parents.

Educator industry tour: The RESD facilitated a tour of interested educators at Morbark, Integrity Fabrication, and Masonic Pathways on August 11, building on the success of the program last summer.

#### Future projects:

SME Educational Foundation: Brian Glowiak, V.P. of the SME Educational Foundation and Mike Johnston of the Michigan Manufacturing Association will present their program which facilitates relationships between manufacturers and educators, with the goal of promoting manufacturing as a career choice. The Education SIG is exploring aligning its ongoing initiatives to the SME template, to strengthen recognition of the programs.

Morey New Tech School: The SIG is working with the Morey Foundation in partnership with the Gratiot/Isabella RESD to determine the feasibility of a New Tech project based learning facility. As the planning process proceeds, the Education SIG will act in an advisory capacity for the school.

### Quality SIG

We are continuing to build the team for the initial Quality SIG. If you re interested in being a member of the "Launch Team" please contact Brian Sheets at brains@avalonpontoons.com. Remember, this is a group of people interested in quality at all levels, so you do not have to be an expert to join.

Also, we are building a key quality contact list for all CMMA companies. Help us by sending the name and contact information of the key contact for your company. Again, send the info to Brian Sheets at brains@avalonpontoons.com.



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**SAVE THE DATE**



**Open House**

**Thursday**  
**February 9, 2017**  
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## Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

### HR SIG

This group is now chaired by Jeff Clark. Brian Pickelman is still an active participant and acts as the co-chair. The group is now focusing on how to generate more participation from our HR constituents and how to engage topic experts in the education and professional development of our membership.

The 4<sup>th</sup> round of the Supervisor training program has just finished up. This training was conducted at MMCC using MMTC instructors – Rave reviews! Another round is scheduled to begin in January.

Wage and benefit surveys will be coming our way soon. Remember you must participate in these surveys in order to get the wage and benefit data.

The focus of the group is now to build a network of HR contacts for all CMMA member companies.

The next meeting date is December 15th.

### Safety SIG

The group has been chaired by Eldon Sprague. Since Eldon has now retired, he has asked to step down from the chair position. Rocky Dowell has agreed to take over as chair and Eldon will work with him to insure a smooth transition. A special thanks to Eldon for all he has contributed to the success of this SIG.

The Safety SIG continues staying busy planning Safety training we can offer over the next several months to member companies. The team meets each month at a SIG member company changing each month with our next meeting being at Aircraft Precision in Ithaca on December the 7<sup>th</sup> from 2 to 4. Each month we have a topic of discussion that becomes the focus of the meeting. Many times this is an opportunity for us all to learn something and gain knowledge about any topic related to Safety.

#### Supervisor's Role in Safety & Health—December 14th

This program is designed for general industry first line supervision, safety and health committee members, and management personnel. Topics covered include employee safety and health training, accident investigation, hazard recognition, and self-inspection techniques. This program gives tips to supervision on methods to integrate health and safety into their daily duties and responsibilities.

Additional training over the next several months will cover :

- Creating a Positive Safety Culture**
- Machine Guarding & Hazard Identification**
- Self-Inspection.**

These will be presented by Brian Kellogg our alliance partner.

Our plan is to survey member companies and define whether these training topics are of interest or if other topics would be more helpful.

I hope all of the member companies are talking getting involved in our Safety Award program. It's always a good thing if you can get your workforce to rally around Safety. The CMMA Safety Award process is a great way for management to fire up the troops and to demonstrate their commitment to Safety.

The next meeting date will be December 7th, hosted by Aircraft Precision.

### Accounting & Supply Chain SIGs

So far we have 6 people who have expressed an interest in participating in these SIGs. We are just a few short of critical mass so please **PARTICIPATE!**

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A BETTER  
MICHIGAN**

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**CMMA  
SIGS**

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## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

### BANDIT INDUSTRIES



Bandit Industries, Inc. manufactures and sells Brush chippers, Whole Tree chippers, The Beast Horizontal Grinders, Tracked Carriers, Stump Grinders and Skid Steer attachments around the world. Product sizes range from compact hand fed machines to machines large enough to process large trees and or stumps.

Serving the rental markets, landscapers, tree services, land clearing, green waste reduction, biomass, paper, pellet mills and more.

Located in Remus, Bandit was started in 1983 with only a handful of employees and two buildings, one 60 x 60 and the other 40 x 80. Early on, Bandit adopted the Henry Ford approach, a limited number of products (Model 100) and the only paint color offered was yellow. In 1986, they also started producing a new smaller unit. That continued for a few years and then around 1988/89 the proverbial "Flood Gates" opened and a wide variety of products started to be introduced. That was also when the first major facility expansion occurred.

From those humble beginnings Bandit has grown dramatically. They currently have more than 400 employees, over 400,000 square feet of manufacturing space, and are sitting on 110 acres located in three townships within Isabella County. Today's annual sales exceed \$125 million.

When asked about what makes the business successful, Scott Parks, Plant Manager, and Lou Jenson, Facilities Manager, summarized it into four key points:

- Listen to your customers (build products that exceed the customer's expectations)
- Stand behind your products (be very responsive to insure any issues are addressed quickly)
- A willingness to adapt as market conditions dictate
- And our employees play a key role in our success also

They also acknowledged the most significant business challenges as well:

- Global competition
- More and more restrictive engine tier regulations

Looking toward the future, Bandit sees many new opportunities emerging as well as continued growth in the traditional wood processing markets. Other markets include chipping of plastic products and shingles for recycling. Both Scott and Lou stated that the key to success tomorrow is to not limit your thinking and be open to new market possibilities and product enhancements.

To learn more about Bandit Industries, visit their website: [www.banditchippers.com](http://www.banditchippers.com)

## Relevant Information

### Consumer's Energy

Consumers Energy has served as Central Michigan's primary power supplier for 130 years. Today, we're more committed than ever to helping the region grow, prosper and succeed. That's why we're spending millions of dollars with contractors and suppliers of goods and services in the region through Pure Michigan Business Connect.

Since June 2015 we have spent \$12.5 million with businesses in Clare, Gladwin, Gratiot and Isabella counties. This investment creates real jobs in Central Michigan. And that makes us proud.

To learn more click [here](#).

### Mid Michigan Community College

#### **National Apprenticeship Week: Purpose, Events & Making Connections**

Written By Shawn Troy, Dean of Occupational Studies, Steven Fosgard, Occupational Studies Instructor, & Meghan Keen, Director of Marketing & Public Relations, of Mid Michigan Community College  
*Courtesy of the U.S. Department of Labor*

Mid Michigan Community College (MMCC) participated in the 2016 National Apprenticeship Week in mid-November, as the event celebrated its second year. The purpose of National Apprenticeship Week is to bring awareness to apprenticeship programs, recognize the importance of apprenticeship roles in the community and bring awareness to the positive economic impact generated.

*When you hear the word apprentice, you might immediately associate it with construction or other skilled trade jobs. But today, in Michigan and states across the nation, the ApprenticeshipUSA system holds opportunities for training in all industries, including healthcare, IT, advanced manufacturing, transportation and energy.*

*In fact, with a network of more than 150,000 employers in more than 1,000 occupations, the ApprenticeshipUSA system has trained millions of apprentices during the last 75 years. Today, the average starting wage for an apprenticeship graduate is more than \$50,000, and apprentices will earn an average of \$300,000 more over their lifetime than their non-apprentice peers.*

*"Apprenticeships are experiencing a modern renaissance in America because the earn-while-learn model is a win-win proposition for workers looking to punch their ticket to the middle-class and for employers looking to grow and thrive in our modern global economy"*

— U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas E. Perez

*The benefits to businesses also make choosing apprenticeship a win-win. Benefits include the ability to improve productivity and profitability, standardize training, reduce turnover, receive tax credits and more. And for every dollar taxpayers invest in apprenticeship programs, we see \$27 in returns.*

National Apprenticeship Week was honored in a number of ways. There were 17 separate events held across the State of Michigan ranging from Detroit to Muskegon. These events ranged from open houses to full proclamation days honoring Michigan's rich heritage of apprenticeship.

Apprenticeships offer experiential, on-the-job learning, which is a central tenet in a number of MMCC's degrees in the form of internships. From automotive technology to business information systems, the College places students in real-world work environments as a mandatory component to completing their degrees. In the near future, MMCC anticipates strengthening and furthering these opportunities for its students.

"Internships and apprenticeships allow students to connect classroom and lab concepts to real situations," says Shawn Troy, Dean of Occupational Studies. "Students learn industry-specific skills as well as soft skills that promote their success. Further, these placements connect local employers with our students, which strengthens both our local talent pool and our local workforce."

MMCC representatives also serve as committee members for the Michigan Educators, Apprentice and Training Association, and our team will be bringing the state wide conference to the Central Michigan area in May 2017. This will provide our communities access to learn about programs, grant opportunities and related trade instruction going on throughout the state of Michigan.

MMCC and CMMA strongly believe that by working together, we can develop the workforce needed for today and tomorrow.

# Relevant Information

## General Agency

### Communicating Benefit Cuts to Employees

With salary cuts, shortened workweeks, halting 401(k) matches and layoffs becoming commonplace in many organizations today, employees are well aware of the economic issues facing employers. As an employer, it is important to use caution when communicating benefit cuts to employees. Communicating changes that ultimately mean less money in employees' pockets is always difficult, so here are some best practices, as well as pitfalls to avoid, while navigating this process.

#### Tips and Best Practices

- An organizational commitment to open communication and transparency is essential during a time of benefit cuts.
- Be straightforward and empathetic with employees.
- If possible, involve employees in cost-cutting decisions. Consider sending out a survey explaining that cuts are necessary and ask which benefits are most important, which they'd be willing to give up, and how much more or less they would pay for certain benefits.
- Plan how to communicate the news to employees.
- Inform employees of the changes as soon as possible. The more time they have before open enrollment, or when the changes will take place, the more smoothly it will go.

#### Pitfalls to Avoid

- Don't assume your employees know why the organization is scaling back. Employees are looking for specific numbers and reasons why there must be changes and cuts. Over-communicating is much better than under-communicating.
- A failure to disclose information and reasoning on why there must be cuts can damage employee morale and lead to the spread of misinformation throughout the workplace.
- A lack of empathy from front-line managers and top executives could lead to employees feeling like the cuts are only affecting them, and not the entire company.
- Keeping employees ignorant until the last minute can result in a loss of trust in management or the organization as a whole.

This "Benefits Insights" is not intended to be exhaustive nor should any discussion or opinions be construed as professional advice.  
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when we work together*

For more information about the Central Michigan Manufacturers Association or to become a member, visit [www.centralmichiganmanufacturing.org](http://www.centralmichiganmanufacturing.org) or email us at [info@centralmichiganmanufacturers.org](mailto:info@centralmichiganmanufacturers.org)

