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SHORT CUTS



ABC calls out Biden's union-friendly NLRB

The case for helping elect political candidates friendly to organized labor is often made clear – albeit in a contrarian fashion – by the anti-union Associated Builders and Contractors.

On Jan. 29, the ABC commented on the situation at the National Labor Relations Board, where President Trump last month made the unprecedented move of firing one of the board members – an appointee of President Biden. That left the NLRB – which is effectively a government watchdog for the rights of American workers – with only two members, both Republicans, and a lack of a quorum to conduct any business.

“Under the Biden administration,” said the Jan. 27 statement by the national ABC, “the NLRB aggressively pushed pro-union policies that tilted the playing field against merit shop (nonunion) contractors and free enterprise. The board’s actions have often favored organized labor at the expense of employers, including those in the construction industry who rely on fair and predictable labor regulations.”

Trump removed Gwynne Wilcox, the first NLRB member in history to be dismissed prior to the end of the member’s five-year term. Wilcox has sued to challenge her removal.

Trump is accused of ignoring the National Labor Relations Act, which says board members can be removed “for neglect of duty or malfeasance in office, but for no other cause.” A 90-year-old Supreme Court case established limits on the president’s power to remove federal board members from their positions.

The presence of a working NLRB – even if it is controlled by a Republican majority – is vital for organized labor, as fledgling unions who are trying to gain a foothold at companies like Starbucks and Amazon need to have their cases heard as a key step in the organizing process.

The traditional course of action during a presidential term changeover would be for the new president to appoint a majority on the board with members from his own party who share his vision. It is widely speculated that Trump may simply choose to ignore the openings at the NLRB, leaving the agency, and any progress for workers, dead in the water.

U.P. Construction Council seeks students

MARQUETTE – The Upper Peninsula Construction Council is seeking current high school juniors to participate in its Construction Connect UP program for the 2025-26 school year.

“Students who successfully complete the program can be drafted directly into skilled trades apprenticeships, bypassing the application process altogether,” said UPCC Executive Director Mike Smith.

The UPCC collaborated with its signatory contractors & U.P. building trades unions, U.P. Michigan Works, Delta-Schoolcraft ISD, Dickinson-Iron ISD and Marquette-Alger Regional Education Services Agency to develop a program that is skill-based, labor- and industry-approved and directly linked to real workplace situations.

Students’ schedules need to allow for two hours in the mornings or afternoon for working, learning, and earning \$14 per hour.

To see qualification information and to apply, go to www.upmichiganworks.org.

Quotable

“The earth is littered with the ruins of empires that believed they were eternal.”
—Camille Paglia (1947-)



FIVE BUILDINGS comprise the \$631 million Central Campus Residential Development at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. U-M is going big to address the chronic lack of undergraduate residential space on campus.

Image credit: Christman Construction

Big residential space rises at U-M

ANN ARBOR – University of Michigan’s Central Campus will be getting some much-needed campus housing – to the tune of an additional 2,300 undergraduate beds.

Ground was broken in October 2023 on the five-building, \$631 million Central Campus Residential Development project, which will include five residence halls ranging between five and seven stories, a dining complex, and a series of green courtyard spaces and quadrangles along a broad pedestrian walkway.

The project is being managed by Christman Construction, working with its subcontractors and building trades union workers. Completion is expected in the summer of 2026.

“This new facility, on the current Elbel Field site, between Hoover Avenue and Division Streets, will enable the university to respond to the increasing demand among students for affordable, on-campus housing on or near Central

Campus and better meet the needs of our growing student body,” U-M said. “It will also help ensure continued excellence in the overall undergraduate experience.”

U-M reports that this will be the first residential facility built specifically for first-year students since 1963. “Over the last two decades, the university’s undergraduate enrollment has increased significantly, yet our

on-campus housing capacity for undergraduate students has not kept pace. In 2004, the university’s undergraduate student-to-bed ratio was 40 percent, but today it has dropped to just 28 percent. The North Quad residence, built in 2010 to provide 450 beds, was the first new undergraduate residence hall built on campus in 40 years.”



Rendering: Stern Associates

A RENDERING of the completed Central Campus housing project at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, looking west from Hill Street. It is being built on the former Elbel Field site, which had been the practice field for the U-M marching band. New expanded space for the band will make available nearby, along with a new \$15.4 million practice and teaching facility.

Upon further review...

NABTU says union numbers rose in '24

By Marty Mulcahy
Editor

WASHINGTON, D.C. – “Actual headcounts” of union members under the umbrella of North America’s Building Trades Unions showed a net membership growth of 49,554 in 2024, NABTU President Sean McGarvey said in a Jan. 29 statement.

“This increase, combined with 2023’s record growth, marks the most significant consecutive expansion of the building trades since the 1950s,” McGarvey said.

The net membership increase among NABTU’s 15 affiliated international unions announced by McGarvey contradicted official government numbers issued last month by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. The BLS numbers showed 916,000 U.S. construction workers who were “members of unions” in 2024, a loss of 38,000 from 2023.

A year ago, McGarvey pointed to the release of a report by the Institute for Construction Employment Research (ICERES) which showed that the BLS drew its data from the entire U.S. construction industry, which means it contains data that includes engineers, accountants and office workers – occupations that don’t

require the wearing of hard hats.

ICERES didn’t update its findings based on 2024’s numbers, but last year estimated that union density in construction was much higher in 2023 (+17.9 percent) vs. BLS numbers.

From 2023 to 2024, the BLS estimated that construction union density dropped from 11.4 percent to 11.2 percent.

The ICERES report went a step further last year, and ex-

cluded residential construction and accounted for the rampant worker misclassification in that sector of the industry. For the nonresidential sectors, report estimated that union density in construction was 29.9 percent for skilled tradespeople.

“The latest BLS data confirms that the union membership rate in construction continues to outpace the overall labor market,” McGarvey said. “However,

Good start for construction in 2025, but sector shows sign of weakness

All in all, it’s been a pretty good start to 2025 for the U.S. construction industry.

The federal Bureau of Labor Statistics reported Feb. 7 that employment in U.S. construction rose by 2.2 percent last month, with job gains (+4,400) in the nonresidential sector outweighing the mild loss of 200 residential jobs.

U.S. construction employment in January totaled 8,291,000 from December. That number rose by 178,000 jobs, or by 2.2 percent, compared to 12 months prior. During those 12 months, nonresidential construction employment rose

by 2.9 percent, a slight slowdown from the 3.1 percent increase from January 2023 to January 2024. The steady-as-she-goes level of sustained construction employment continues to vex contractors, as those workers who retire or otherwise exit the industry are outpacing new hires.

“The already tight labor market is getting tighter in the construction sector,” said Jeffrey Shoaf, the Associated General Contractors’ chief executive officer. “Absent new investments in construction training and work authorization programs, it will be hard for firms

it’s important to note that BLS estimates, based on small sample surveys, fail to capture the full picture of union construction. NABTU’s verified net gain of nearly 50,000 members in 2024, based on actual headcounts, represents real, documented growth, officially reported to the U.S. Department of Labor by each NABTU-affiliated union. This sustained increase reflects the

(Continued on Page 3)

Billionaires Musk, Bezos push Trump to shutter NLRB

By Harold Meyerson
The American Prospect

On Jan. 8, even as firestorms wreaked havoc around Los Angeles, attorneys representing Amazon came to the federal courthouse in downtown L.A. to make clear that their client was still insisting on dismantling the only agency of government that enables private-sector workers to join unions and bargain collectively with their employers.

During Joe Biden’s presidency, his appointees to the National Labor Relations Board – a majority of the Board’s members and the agency’s general counsel – had strengthened workers’ rights to form unions and sought to penalize employers who illegally thwarted those rights, in a manner not seen since the presidencies of Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman.

Vexed by the Board’s determination to resurrect the letter and spirit of the original pro-worker National Labor Relations Act,

Why? Union gains under Biden are a threat to world’s richest men

Viewpoint

Amazon, as well as SpaceX and Starbucks, had all brought lawsuits during the past year arguing that the NLRB’s power to charge unions and employers for labor law violations and have administrative courts hold hearings and rule on those charges had suddenly become unconstitutional. This is a power upheld by the Supreme Court in 1937 that had gone unchallenged ever since.

Not coincidentally, beginning in 2022, both Amazon and Starbucks had seen workers at a number of their facilities vote to go union, the first time either company had experienced such an affront to their hitherto unchallenged power.

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Whitmer’s turn: new \$3B road repair plan released

By Marty Mulcahy
Editor

LANSING – Now, there are dueling \$3 billion plans to fix the damn roads.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer on Feb. 10 unveiled her \$3 billion “Mi Road Ahead” plan, which her office called “fiscally responsible, balanced, and sustainable.” She is proposing additional funding for Michigan road and bridge repairs by ensuring gas tax revenue goes toward fixing the roads, cutting costs within the state budget, clos-

ing a tax loophole for marijuana and asking corporations to “pay their share” for using Michigan roads.

Michigan House Speaker Matt Hall (R-Richland Twp.) on Jan. 16 unveiled his own \$3.1 billion road and bridge repair plan.

“Since day one,” Whitmer said, “I’ve been focused on fixing the damn roads, and while I’m proud of the progress we’ve made, there’s still a lot more to do. Today, I’m excited to introduce my brand-new plan that provides a long-term, sustainable solution to fix our roads so we can help more Michiganders stay safe on the road, save money, and get where they’re going faster.”

Whitmer’s plan calls for \$1.7 billion in new revenue from “massive corporations” such as Amazon, X, Facebook and TikTok to “pay their fair share to do business in Michigan and use Michigan roadways.” That would seemingly apply to delivery giant Amazon more than others. Not really related to impact on the roads, her plan also seeks to derive more money from “big tech” industries, that “bombard Michiganders with nuisance pop up advertisements that inconvenience consumers.”

The governor said her plan would further be funded by directly allocating to road work the \$1.2 billion that state drivers pay in sales taxes at the gas pump. Currently, 25 percent of those funds are diverted elsewhere in the state’s budget. Another \$500 million would come from unnamed budget state budget cuts.

And \$470 million would come from eliminating a tax exemption for the state’s marijuana industry.

Hall’s plan also pledges to raise the money without raising taxes. Like Whitmer’s, his plan would permanently dedicate all taxes paid at the pump to road funding, while reallocating another \$2.2 billion in existing

(Continued on Page 2)

Students get building trades career lessons

By Marty Mulcahy, Editor

COOPERSVILLE – Interested in a career in the pipe trades? Or how about becoming an electrician?

High school students in West Michigan who might have had those questions were given an opportunity to get answers about a future career in those trades, as they met with apprentices, journeymen and training professionals at the apprenticeship schools of IBEW Local 275 and Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Local 174.

The “Construction Field Trip” organized by West Michigan Works! in conjunction with the local union training centers, welcomed 85-90 junior and senior high school students for half a day on Feb. 5 at each union school. The students were bused in from six educational organizations, including the Kent County Intermediate School District and the Muskegon Career Technical Center.

“The event gave the students an opportunity to learn about the trades and a possible

(Continued on Page 12)

FOURTH-YEAR UA Local 174 apprentices (l-r) Andrew Fredrickson, Jake Boer and Jacob O’Brien tell a group of high schoolers what they can expect in a career in the pipe trades during a Feb. 5 “Construction Field Trip” event at the union’s apprenticeship school.



Viewpoints



Into the arms of unions

In their aggressive bid to upend the federal government, Elon Musk and his lieutenants have, perhaps unintentionally, driven thousands of federal workers into the arms of one of the biggest enemies of their sweeping project. Organized labor.

Unions that represent federal government workers are reporting significant increases in signups since President Trump took office and empowered Musk's "Department of Government Efficiency" to drastically slash the federal workforce.

The American Federation of Government Employees, the largest union representing federal workers, added 5,575 new members in the first six days of February alone. By comparison, the union gained 14,996 new members during all of 2024.

Currently, AFGE has 319,233 active members – a record, exceeding its previous high-water mark in 2018, during the first Trump Administration. At another large federal workers union, the National Federation of Federal Employees, membership is "going through the roof," said union president Randy Erwin.

"Our phones have been ringing off the hook from our members, from the media, but also from people who are unrepresented who want union representation for the first time," Erwin said. "People are signing up in droves."

It is not hard to understand why. Trump and Musk have quickly and bluntly made clear to the vast majority of the nation's roughly 3 million federal workers that their jobs are at risk, a threat union leaders describe as unprecedented. "If you don't have union representation," said Erwin, "you might as well consider yourself an at-will employee under this administration."

Less than three weeks into the new administration, DOGE has already effectively crippled one federal agency, the U.S. Agency for International Development, where the administration is trying to fire all but 290 of its 10,000 workers. Employees at other federal agencies who work on projects Trump and Musk do not favor have been abruptly put on "administrative leave," including 160 employees at the Environmental Protection Agency's environmental justice division. This could represent merely an opening salvo; before the inauguration, Musk talked about cutting the federal workforce by 75 percent.

With Democrats sidelined in Washington, organized labor will likely be the key player in lawsuits over the administration's plans. They will also be marshaling their membership to galvanize elected officials, and public opinion, against the deep government cuts. And they'll be looking to continue expanding membership, given federal employees are not required to join unions.

This moment puts public sector unions "at the front lines not just of defending their negotiated contracts and rights but defending the rule of law and democracy itself," said Jennifer Sherer, a labor advocate who analyzes labor policy at the left-leaning Economic Policy Institute. "It's not surprising that folks are looking to unions for accurate and timely guidance on the directives that they're being given," she said.

The task for unions comes at a complex political moment for organized labor. Trump won in 2024 with more organized labor support than any Republican candidate in generations. Public sector unions represent a workforce that Trump and his allies have long antagonized as the "swamp" or the "deep state," building on decades of Republican animosity toward union representation of government workplaces.

In the 2024 campaign, the Project 2025 policy blueprint drafted by Trump allies – which is increasingly being carried out now – asserted that government employee unions were incompatible with democracy and suggested Congress consider banning them. DOGE's assault on the federal government may revitalize the public sector unions that Trump and conservatives want to marginalize.

Sam Brodey, via *Portside*



Men on the move

MOVING A GANTRY at the Oakland Community College Culinary School in Royal Oak are electricians (l-r) William Jung and Jason Hagemeyer. The IBEW Local 58 members are employed by Centerline Electric.

New \$3B road repair plan released

(Continued from Page 1)

state expenditures toward roads. Within that \$2.2 billion, about \$1 billion would be raised from eliminating legislative earmarks (lawmakers' pet projects) and corporate subsidies.

For decades, Michigan's lawmakers have acknowledged the state's chronic road funding deficit and the resulting substandard state of our roads and

bridges. But they have struggled with how to come up with a funding source. A gas tax hike, vehicle registration fee increase, money shifts from other parts of the state budget, toll roads – all have been floated. Whitmer's first attempt – a 45 cent gas tax increase in 2019 – was ignored by GOP lawmakers.

The latest estimate by the Michigan Infrastructure and Transportation Association says

Michigan needs to spend an additional \$3.9 billion a year to improve its roads and bridges to "good" or "fair" condition.

The initial reactions to each other's plans were cordial, and noncommittal. "I appreciate Gov. Whitmer's joining the conversation on this issue and I look forward to working together to ensure Michigan drivers get the safe, reliable roads they deserve," Hall said.

We celebrate corporate boneheads...why?

By Jim Hightower

Corporate chieftains are giants, even geniuses – right?

Years ago, laissez-faire ideologue Ayn Rand hailed them as society's supermen, comparing them to Atlas, the mythological Greek god who



"holds the world on his shoulders."

But look, here comes one of her modern-day gods now – Timothy Wentworth! He stands astride Walgreens, the multibillion-dollar drugstore conglomerate.

Last month, Wentworth demonstrated his corporate prowess by offering a stunning insight. He noted that, with shoplifting on the rise, chains like his had reacted by moving much of their merchandise into locked display cases. But the ever-alert Big Boss has now deduced that this impacts sales, "because when you lock things up, for example, you don't sell as many of them."

Wow... pure genius!

Did I mention that Walgreens pays Timothy \$13 million a year? Or, that his monopolistic chain is closing some 1,200 of its "less-profitable" stores, which will leave entire communities with no pharmacies to meet their crucial needs?

My point is not to disparage one silly corporate boss, but

simply to say: Hey, why are the so-called "leaders" of both of our political parties kowtowing to the painful ignorance, arrogance, and avarice of the most self-serving group of egos in the world: Billionaires!

Look at them – Elon Musk is a jabbering jerk, Mark Zuckerberg is a pathetic whiner, and Jeff Bezos cluelessly floats around on a garish yacht he financed by underpaying and mistreating his workers.

These are our giants? What about schoolteachers, family farmers, mechanics, cooks – and other everyday people who really make things work? America needs to start listening to them... and reinvesting in their genuine genius.

Just joking

A priest was being honored at his retirement dinner after 25 years in the parish.

A longtime elder member of the congregation was chosen to make a presentation and give a little speech at the dinner. However, he was delayed, so the priest decided to say his own few words while they waited.



"I got my first impression of the parish from the first confession I heard here," he said. "I thought I had been assigned to a terrible place!" The audience laughed nervously.

"The very first person who entered my confessional told me he had robbed his neighbor's house, and when he was questioned by the police, he said he lied his way out of it. That he had stolen money from his parents, embezzled from his employer, and had an affair with his boss's wife.

"I was appalled, but as the days went on, I learned that the rest of this congregation was not like him at all! Indeed, I came to a fine parish full of good and loving people."

Just as the priest finished his words, the elder arrived full of apologies at being late. He immediately began his presentation. "I'll never forget the first day our new parish priest arrived," said the man said, gesturing to the priest. "In fact, as I recall I had the honor of being the first person to go to him for confession..."

"What's another word for Thesaurus?"

–Steven Wright (1955 -)

"The policy of being too cautious is the greatest risk of all."

–Jawaharlal Nehru (1889 - 1964)

"Tact is the knack of making a point without making an enemy."

–Isaac Newton (1642 - 1727)

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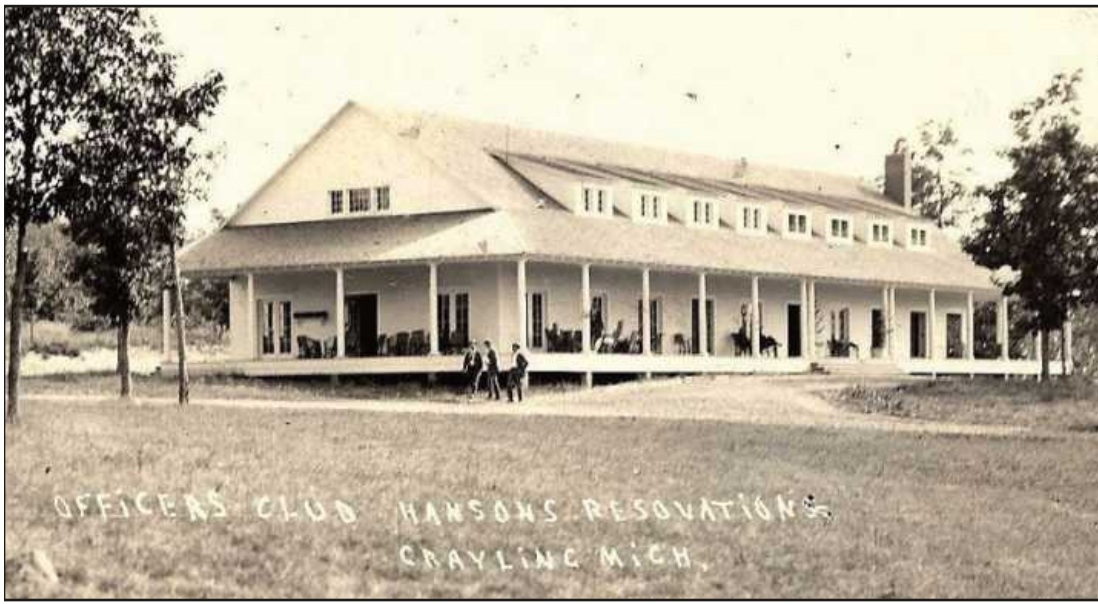


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BUILDING MICHIGAN! Camp Grayling HISTORY IN THE MAKING

By Marty Mulcahy



THE MOST SIGNIFICANT historic building at Camp Grayling is the Officers Club, which is a gathering place for military officers to relax and socialize. It was added to the list of Michigan State Historic Sites in 1978. “Built in 1917,” says the Grayling Chamber of Commerce, “it has since served as the focal point for the social and formal functions of the Michigan National Guard Officer Corps. Reminiscent of the architecture that is typical of southern military structures, the colonnaded veranda and symmetrically spaced dormers set into the low hipped roof are common to militia camps and army posts erected at the turn of the century. The Officers Club has been in continuous operation since its inception.” The Officers Club can be reserved (by officers) for weddings, celebrations, and more, with a large ballroom downstairs available for their use. The ten rooms upstairs allow for overnight stays for officers. This photo is undated.

Tall, grand, historic, interesting, unique – Michigan has its share of buildings that fit one or more of those descriptions, but they really don’t apply to the no-frills, utilitarian collection of housing, mess halls and offices at Camp Grayling. Although some pre-1940s buildings, like the Officers Club, have some historic interest.

Instead, Camp Grayling packs its historical punch in other ways. Starting with its local economic impact and topographical footprint, which is simply massive – the camp is spread across 147,000 acres in three counties in the northern Lower Peninsula.

“Camp Grayling is the largest National Guard training facility in the U.S., due to its many ranges and ample maneuver areas,” says the Grayling Convention and Visitors Bureau. “Each year, Camp Grayling typically schedules training for over 20,000 military personnel from National Guard units in Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Ohio, as well as regular Army and Reserve units. The installation provides over 200 full-time jobs to local residents, making Camp Grayling one of the largest employers in Crawford County. Camp activities generate over \$20 million annually in local economic impact.”

Camp Grayling was founded in 1913, with a land grant from lumber baron Rasmus Hanson to the State of Michigan for the use of the military. The camp initially had 13,760 acres, and includes picturesque Lake Margrethe, named after Hanson’s wife.

The land grant was made a few years before the U.S. involvement in World War I and in time to host Army training for the Great War. The camp would subsequently be used for infantry training during World War II and for training by Marines in the Vietnam War.

Warfare preparedness training changed over the decades, and Camp Grayling’s infrastructure changed along with it. The Grayling Army Airfield was built from 1927-1929, and then its runways were black-topped in 1936. The camp eventually added artillery training, and could host multiple, different groups of infantry training at the same time. Pilots could fly while

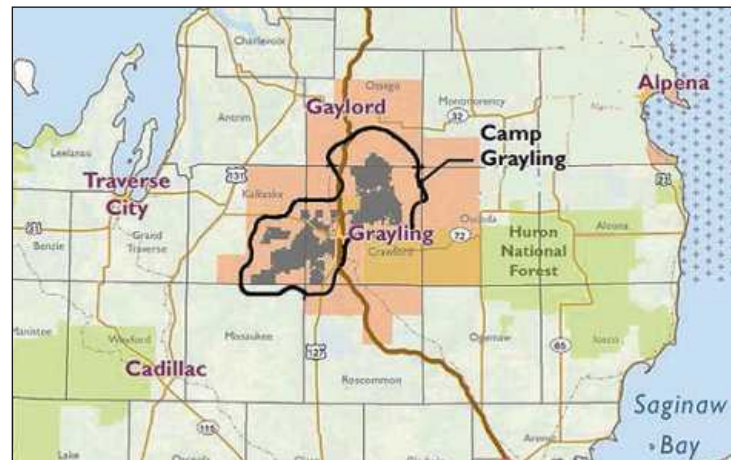
CAMP GRAYLING takes up some serious real estate in the northern Lower Peninsula.

practice infantry and cavalry maneuvers and artillery live fire drills went on around the landscape.

Camp Grayling grew over the years to its present size, and is spread over Crawford, Kalkaska and Otsego counties. The National Guard has maintained the airfield except during World War II when the federal government assumed responsibility. Today’s camp includes modern support facilities, 9,938 acres of live fire area, 2,781 acres of duded impact area (where ordnance duds are detonated or impacted), and 17,246 acres of maneuver space.

The Grayling Army Airfield, one mile northwest of the host city’s downtown, is owned by the Army, and contains two 5,000-foot intersecting runways, which are long enough to accommodate turbo props, light jets, and mid-size jets, and military C-130 and C-17 aircraft. The site can accommodate parking for 100 helicopters. There is an 800-square-foot operations building which includes an operations center, flight planning room, safety office, commander’s office, and a weather room. Additionally, the airfield contains a 6,400-square-foot maintenance hangar, crash rescue barn and navigational aid area.

Noting that Camp Grayling is the nation’s largest military installation east of the Mississippi, John Clevenger, writing for *The Military History of the Upper Great Lakes*, said today’s camp “can house up to 13,649 personnel and can feed up to 11,900 with its 70 dining facilities. There are 15 battalion headquarters buildings for administration and supply needs. The camp also has an ammunition supply point on base to handle any ordnance requirements of the training sessions. Seven vehicle buildings house up to 527 tracked vehicles, including 77 M-1 tanks that can be used during



training. It also has bulk fuel sites providing fuel for all the on-base vehicles.”

During the camp’s year-round training session, Clevenger writes that “artillery, mortar, tank and infantry maneuvers are practiced as well as unit-wide operation simulations. The camp also has several specialized training grounds, including urban assault ranges, an IED (improvised explosive device) range, used for learning how to protect from IEDs, a 10.2-mile live fire convoy commander’s reaction range, rappelling tower, water operations, helicopter door gunnery range, anti-armor range, POW compound, demolition range, nuclear/biological/chemical chamber, parachute/drop zone and a small arms range that the local law enforcement also uses for training. The air field is also used for training air-to-ground munition delivery missions.”

The National Guard calls its facility “a premier, world-class Joint Maneuver Training Center. Camp Grayling is a leader in providing efficient, unparalleled customer-focused service and the highest level of modern training. Support resources are scheduled year-round to provide a wide range of high-quality training service members, emergency responders and private-sector customers worldwide.” The site has a partnership with the Northern Michigan Law Enforcement group for training purposes.

Camp Grayling has more than 600 soldiers in traditional Army National Guard units regularly assigned to it. Located in a sparsely populated area along I-75 at M-72, most state residents are only aware of its goings-on when they see service men and women assigned to the camp driving military vehicles up and down the freeway.

On behalf of the State of Michigan, we appreciate the work they do and having them around.

Billionaires Musk, Bezos push Trump to shutter NLRB

(Continued from Page 1)

(Though no major organizing campaign was under way at SpaceX, the Board did charge the company with two labor law violations over illegal firings, which was all it took to prompt CEO Elon Musk to file suit against the NLRB as well.)

As is the norm for American employers, both Amazon and Starbucks have yet to sign contracts with any of their workers who voted to go union.

Amazon argues that its now three-year refusal to bargain with Staten Island warehouse workers who voted to unionize in early 2022 doesn’t violate the nation’s labor law. It also argues that its California, New York, Illinois, and Georgia delivery drivers who’ve voted to join the Teamsters – who deliver packages from Amazon warehouses, driving Amazon trucks, wearing Amazon uniforms, obeying Amazon’s productivity standards, and who are surveilled by Amazon cameras in their Amazon cabs – aren’t really Amazon employees, since Amazon franchises out its driving operations to third-party contracting companies.

This means that the new Board will surely reverse several Biden NLRB rulings in short order. Like the one that had held the mega-companies that franchise out their work to contractors jointly responsible for labor law violations at those contractors, and for refusing to enter into bargaining with those franchised workers.

Like the *Cemex* ruling, which compelled employers to begin bargaining with their workers when those employers had been found to have violated labor law and when a majority of those workers had affiliated with a union.

Like the Biden NLRB ruling that instructed Amazon to bargain with drivers at its Palmdale facility in northern L.A. County, who’d voted to join the Teamsters, to which Amazon had responded by dropping its contract with the contractor (who was the drivers’ nominal employer) and claiming it had no obligation to bargain with those workers.

But despite the impending 180-degree shift in the composition and posture of the NLRB, Amazon’s attorneys weren’t content to let the new Trump NLRB reverse its ruling on joint employers, or undo the increase in penalties employers face for their all-but-routine violations of labor law.

In federal district court in Los Angeles (where the Palmdale case is being litigated), and in federal district court in Texas (where the Staten Island case is dubiously being litigated), the lawyers for the companies founded by the world’s two richest men – Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk – have persisted in their efforts to effectively abolish the only federal agency with the power to enable workers to have some say in their compensation and their conditions of work.

A word on the Texas lawsuit: Despite the fact that none of the Amazon warehouses whose workers and drivers have voted to go union are in or even near Texas, Amazon’s lawyers filed their suit in federal court there on the microscopically thin premise that of the roughly 8,000 workers at the Staten Island warehouse at the time they voted to go union, precisely four of them now reside in Texas. Of course, they really filed in Texas because federal

district courts there, and in particular the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals there, are famously Neanderthal-style right-wing. The NLRB has filed to move the case to Washington, D.C.

Even though the combined wealth of Bezos and Musk now exceeds an almost incomprehensible half a trillion dollars, they have glimpsed spotty clouds on their earnings horizon.

In 2024, Gallup put unions’ approval rating at 71 percent, while the share of Americans who had a “great deal” of confidence in big business stood at a bare 6 percent. Worse yet, the Biden NLRB was imposing actual penalties – like being compelled to enter bargaining – on employers who illegally threatened or fired workers seeking unionization.

For years, the only penalty imposed on employers had been to reinstate the workers they’d illegally fired, fork over their back pay, and post a notice in the workplace saying they’d violated the NLRA, which is small potatoes when compared to having workers with whom they are actually compelled to bargain.

And when Republicans controlled the NLRB, employers could often avoid even those mini-sanctions.

In federal court in San Antonio, Amazon’s attorneys have not contented themselves with simply contesting the constitutionality of the NLRB. They’ve also sought an injunction immediately forbidding the NLRB from issuing a final ruling on the cases brought against it, arguing that to do so suddenly constitutes “irreparable harm” against the company, despite the fact that NLRB rulings are not self-enforcing and that Amazon can appeal that ruling or any such ruling in federal courts, a process that can take months or even years.

Julie Gutman Dickinson, the attorney who represents the Teamsters in these proceedings, notes that Amazon had “brought 43 charges against the Teamsters and Amazon Labor Union (the union of the Staten Island warehouse workers, who later voted to affiliate with the Teamsters) before the Board.

They consistently availed themselves of process” – until, apparently, they decided the one way they could ensure they’d prevail was to shut down the NLRB altogether.

After almost 90 years during which the Board has ruled for

and against employers and for and against workers, it suddenly became a matter of immediate urgency to shut the Board down through a court injunction.

Attorneys for both Bezos and Musk have likely calculated that the ferociously anti-union Supreme Court Justice Sam Alito may be able to assemble enough of his Supreme Court colleagues to curtail at least some of the NLRB’s fundamental powers.

They are doubtless also encouraged by the Court’s 6-3 decision last year to curtail the regulatory powers of federal agencies and leave it to the courts to determine which rules and regulations pass muster.

Whether or not Amazon gets its injunction, it can still press its case against the NLRB, just as SpaceX and Starbucks can press theirs. It’s not clear that Trump’s NLRB will continue to oppose those companies in court; if it chooses not to, the Teamsters (for the Amazon workers) and Workers United (for the Starbucks baristas) will continue to try to keep the NLRB up and running.

As there’s no union involvement at SpaceX, however, Musk’s lawyers could continue unopposed if President Trump (or de facto President Musk) tells the NLRB to drop the case, and effectively, to drop out of sight.

NABTU says membership numbers rose in '24

(Continued from Page 1)

steady market share expansion we have experienced since 2012.”

McGarvey said there’s more membership where that came from, with a “record-breaking” 314,958 union apprentices now enrolled in its registered apprenticeship programs nationwide.

“This unmatched workforce development investment rooted in collective bargaining with our contractor partners ensures a robust pipeline of the most highly skilled workers to meet industry demands,” he said. “With a strong construction economy ahead, we remain confident in continuing this momentum – expanding opportunities for even more workers to join our ranks and building a stronger, more resilient workforce for generations to come.”

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THIS UNDATED World War I-era photo shows a Michigan National Guard encampment on “Headquarters Hill” at Camp Grayling.

Students get career lessons in trades

(Continued from Page 1) career path,” said Jason Khoury, the construction industry council lead for West Michigan Works!, which provides support and connections for current and potential job seekers. “We received a lot of positive feedback, which we plan on incorporating into future events as we grow the program.”

A nationwide survey last summer released by the Associated General Contractors found that 90 percent of construction contractors report they are having a hard time filling open positions.

While there have been past career outreach programs in West Michigan by the construction industry, Michigan Building and Construction Trades Council Business Representative James Callahan said union participation had been lacking. The opportunity of being able to partner with West Michigan Works! and have the students transported to both of the union apprenticeship schools – which are only minutes apart – made for a convenient teaching and learning opportunity. The students split their day-long field trip into morning and afternoon visits to Local 275’s and Local 174’s training centers.

“We wanted to get our unions in the region more involved into outreach with young people looking at careers, and this was a first time for us,” Callahan said. “The event went really well. I know a lot of other unions would like to get involved, like the sheet metal workers and the carpenters, but unfortunately we’re limited by the locations of our schools. These are tough to do if the driving distance for the kids is too great.”

Khoury said West Michigan Works! is planning on using the lessons learned from these apprenticeship school visits to help launch expanded regional outreach efforts in October. It will be an “opportunity to showcase construction careers,” not only by building trades unions, but by community colleges, construction jobsite visits, and employers, he said.

“Learn to see in another’s calamity the ills which you should avoid.”

–Publius Syrus (~100 BC)



IBEW LOCAL 275 apprenticeship instructor Bryce Butler and first-year apprentice Logan Gorman talk to high school students at the union’s school during the construction field trip on Feb. 5.



FIFTH-YEAR apprentices Nathan Voss and Edward Ryan show some tools of the pipe trades to West Michigan high school juniors and seniors during their “Construction Field Trip.” The event was held Feb. 5, and included a stop at the Plumbers, Pipe Fitters and Service Trades Local 174 apprenticeship school in Coopersville, located between Grand Rapids and Muskegon.

FIRST-YEAR apprentices Jonathan Rosenberg and Zach Meeks of IBEW Local 275 connect with high school students potentially interested in a career as an electrician. They’re visiting the Local 275 apprenticeship school in Coopersville.



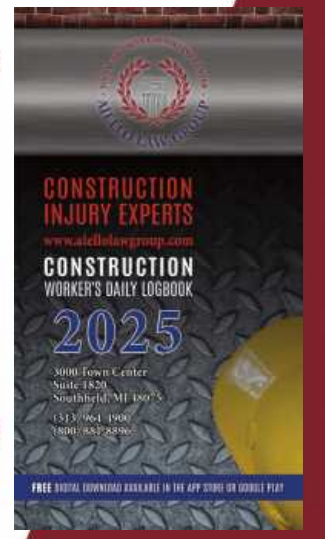
FOURTH-YEAR APPRENTICE Kerado Harris of Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Local 174 makes a demonstration to West Michigan high schoolers at the local’s apprenticeship school during the Construction Field Trip event on Feb. 5.

2025 LOGBOOKS ARE HERE

HARD COPY & MOBILE APP VERSIONS

Aiello Law Group has just released our 2025 Construction Worker’s Daily Logbook in both a print and digital version! We have provided logbooks to Michigan’s building trades for over 30 years.

The traditional paper version can be picked up in our office, your union hall, the Building Trades office at 1640 Porter in Detroit, or can be mailed directly to you by giving us a call at (313) 964-4900. The digital version can be found in the App Store for Apple or Google Play for Android. Simply search for “Aiello Daily Logbook.”



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Local 47
Heat and Frost
Insulators

Heat and Frost Insulators & Allied Workers Local 47

LANSING – *The next Regular Meeting will be held on Friday, March 14, 2025 at 7:30 p.m. It will be held at the J.A.T.C. Training Center, located at 16475 Ingersoll Rd., Lansing, MI 48906.

To ensure all Active Members and Retirees are receiving their Robo calls please make sure you have not blocked the following number: (804) 441-8365. There are several members who have the number blocked and therefore are not receiving the Robo Calls.

These calls are only used for Important Notifications from the Local Union Business Manager and Funeral Notifications.

If you are not receiving these calls, please contact the Local Union Office and we will double check to make sure we have the correct number in the system or if you may have blocked the number.

Please notify the Local Union Office with any phone and home address changes. We need the most current member information throughout our system, TIC's, and the with the International.

If you are Non-Active retiree or Surviving Spouse and would like to continue receiving the Building Tradesman please contact the Union Office to let us know.

Per the Rules and Procedures:

*Members must notify the office within 24 hours of being laid off or charges may be placed, you can do so by calling or texting the office at (517) 708-0665 with your layoff date and the name of the Contractor you were laid off from.

*Members must notify the office before ANY overtime is worked.

Pension and Health Welfare: Joshua Kroell (989) 385-2671
Allied Workers' Local 47 Fringe Benefit Funds, 6525 Centurion Drive, Lansing, MI 48917-9275

"Every mile is two in winter."
-George Herbert (1593 - 1633)

Toll Free: (800) 323-8079
Telephone: (517) 321-7502
Fax: (517) 321-7508

Joshua Kroell will be available via phone to answer any questions regarding Pension, Welfare and Vacation Funds. Joshua is the Secretary for the Pension, Welfare, Vacation and Special Benefits and can be reached by phone at (989) 385-2671, or by mail at: P.O. Box 1498, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48804.

To all active members, if you have not sent in your Coordination of Benefits Form, your Spousal Form, or your Birth Certificates for your Children, no one will be covered on our insurance until these items are sent to TIC. Please call TIC immediately at (800) 323-8079 and get the above-mentioned forms into the fund ASAP and you will be reinstated retroactively

Remember that Auto and Motorcycle accidents are not covered by our plan. Auto and Motorcycle accidents should be covered by your personal Auto Insurance policy.

Members having questions regarding Pension and Welfare Fund please contact TIC International at the numbers below or log onto their Website: www.heatfrostlocal47benefits.org:

Please complete and return the working spousal forms to TIC.

JATC Coordinator Phil Wilson (616-466-8736)

Applications are open for the Apprenticeship Program. Call the Union Office.

Under Duties of Apprenticeship, Section 5.3 part L, page 4 of the Apprenticeship Standards states, "According to the Apprenticeship Standards you are required to accurately fill out the online work report for NO later than ten (10) days from the end of the current work week."

Good and Welfare:
Congratulations to Ollie and Brandy Hull on the birth of their daughter Millie!

Local 47 would like to send our Condolences to the Family and Friends of Doug Shoffner. Doug passed away on Friday, Dec. 13, 2024.



Local 25
Heat and Frost Insulators

Heat & Frost Insulators 25

SOUTHFIELD – UNION MEETING: The next scheduled Membership Meeting will take place Thursday, March 13, 2025 at 6 p.m. at the Union Hall, 21353 Bridge St., Southfield, MI 48033.

WEEKLY HUMOR: What's the difference between a hippo and a zippo? One is heavy, the other is a little lighter!

ATTENDANCE POLICY: In light of several employers handing out jobsite specific attendance policies, refer to Article XII, Section A of the Collective Bargaining Agreement listed below. Please be reminded, good attendance is crucial in manning the work that we have in our territory.

Article XII, Section A: The Company has the right to discipline an employee for excessive absenteeism. The first two unexcused absences without good cause shall bring written warnings from the Company, with a copy to be furnished, in each case, to the Union. The Union shall be notified in writing no later than four business days after the infraction has occurred. Any infraction not reported in four business days, shall be deemed not to have occurred.

Any subsequent unexcused absence without good cause may be cause for discharge. Absences for good cause such as illness, family emergency and the like and excused absences shall not be cause for discipline, provided the employee notifies the Company not later than 9 a.m. (on the day of the absence.) No absence more than three months prior shall be considered in any manner or under any circumstances in the imposition of discipline and shall be deemed not to have occurred. Any dispute relative to discipline or discharge of an employee shall be processed through the grievance procedure established in this Agreement.

An employee must call the main employer's office if they leave the jobsite during working hours, excluding lunch time. An employee's unexcused absence may be cause for discharge as outlined above.

SUB FUND BENEFIT:

Each time a participant receives a State Unemployment check, he/she must mail or deliver the receipt, check stub, or a copy of the check to the Administrator's office within 30 days of receipt.

An example of the State Unemployment certificate receipt is available at the Union Hall or can be sent upon request.

PER CAPITA: Please be reminded, any member working 32 hours or less during a month must pay their own Per Capita of \$14 a month. Per Capita payments should be made on a monthly basis. If a member works as a traveler in another Local's jurisdiction, the member must remit double Per Capita of \$28. Please forward your payments monthly to Local 25, 21353 Bridge Street, Southfield, MI 48033.

EMPLOYMENT CHANGES: All employment changes; hire, lay off, fire, shop change, disability, etc. must be called into the Union Hall within 48 hours. This is the only way to guarantee you are on the out of work list and your employment records remain current and correct. Failure to report will result in an automatic \$50 fine.

BENESYS: When calling the Fund Office, Benesys, please be sure to get the name of the person providing you information.



Culinary school painting

ASKED TO BREAK from setting up a paint sprayer to have their photos taken, Aaron Binkley and John Matzke helpfully complied. They're members of Painters District Council 1M, employed by Detroit Spectrum Painting, working at the Oakland Community College Culinary School project in Royal Oak.

"Never miss a chance to keep your mouth shut."
-Robert Newton Peck

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Outdoors

U.P. moose study launched



By Rachel Lincoln
Michigan Department of Natural Resources

The 1,000-pound Michigan bull moose, standing 6 feet, 5 inches tall with 40-pound, paddle-like antlers, is the iconic symbol of the Upper Peninsula's wilderness.

Despite their majestic status, Michigan's moose have faced significant challenges over the past century. To understand the factors shaping their survival today, researchers are examining population trends and the hurdles moose encounter.

"Michigan's moose are a vital part of the Upper Peninsula's ecosystem and identity," said Tyler Petroelje, northern Michigan wildlife research specialist for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. "Through this new study of factors limiting moose population growth, we're working to uncover a clearer path for the future of moose in Michigan."

Aerial survey. DNR wildlife biologists have conducted aerial surveys to estimate the moose population in the western U.P. since 1997. Every other year in January, survey planes fly low in a grid pattern over Marquette, Baraga and Iron counties as researchers record the number of moose spotted.

Doing the survey in winter makes it easier for trained spotters to see moose against the leafless, snowy landscape, but it's still impossible to count every moose. Instead, the numbers are adjusted using a statistical model to estimate the population.

The 2023 U.P. DNR moose survey showed a population of 426 moose in the western part of the region. The 95 percent confidence interval estimates a range between 334 and 518 individuals.

In addition to the regular aerial survey, researchers will begin a new project later this month to explore the reasons behind the slowed moose growth rate.

The full name of the study is "Factors limiting moose population growth in the western Upper



A MOOSE IS SHOWN captured on a trail camera in the Michigamme Highlands, west of Marquette, as part of the ongoing Michigan Department of Natural Resources Wolf Abundance Survey. (Photo credit: Michigan DNR and Michigan State University)

Peninsula."

New moose study. Through this new effort, the DNR, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community and Northern Michigan University will work together to try to better understand the trends and challenges the Michigan moose herd faces.

"As co-stewards of our shared land and natural resources, the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community welcomes the opportunity to work with the DNR and NMU to help answer important questions about the Michigan moose population," said Erin Johnston, wildlife and habitat manager for the KBIC Natural Resources Department in Baraga.

Researchers anticipate fitting 60 moose with new tracking equipment over the next two years. During this first year of the study, 20 moose will be captured and equipped with radio collars, which will provide precise location data.

Tracking these movements will help researchers understand moose survival and causes of mortality, pregnancy rates and birthing events.

"There is a need to examine why moose population growth in the Upper Peninsula has been

stagnant over the past decade," said Diana Lafferty, associate professor in biology at NMU. "As such, measuring vital rates like reproduction, survival, immigration, emigration, as well as identifying factors that may be limiting moose population growth, such as parasites, disease, predation, vehicle collisions and habitat alteration are essential for understanding and modeling population dynamics."

During the capture operation, spotter planes will report moose locations to nearby helicopters and ground crews. Moose will be sedated, and crews will move in quickly to collect biological information and fit the moose with a tracking collar.

The captures will take place in mid-to-late February, depending on weather and other conditions, across the western moose range, in an approximately 500-square-mile block across the Michigamme Highlands.

"For the safety of moose, researchers and others, we are asking the public to please avoid the area where the helicopter and snowmobile ground crews are operating," said John Pepin, DNR deputy public information officer. "Before those activities start, we

want people to know what will be happening, and just as we recommend for moose sightings and photography – keep a safe distance away."

History of moose in Michigan. Moose once occurred throughout much of the state. But European settlement led to unregulated hunting and habitat loss, with moose disappearing from the Lower Peninsula and their numbers declining to just a few scattered individuals in the Upper Peninsula by the early 19th Century.

After a failed reintroduction attempt in the 1930s, a new project began in the 1980s, fondly known as the "Moose Lift." Fifty-nine moose were transported by helicopter and truck from Algonquin Provincial Park in Ontario, Canada, to northwest Marquette County.

The goal of the moose reintroduction was to produce a self-sustaining population of free-ranging moose in the Upper Peninsula.

Nearly 40 years later, the moose population in the western part of the region where the translocation occurred has grown to more than 400 – but is still well below an initial projected goal of

1,000 animals by the year 2000.

Over the last few decades, researchers have observed two very different periods of population growth. During 1997-2007, the population grew steadily by 10 percent each year. But data from the biennial aerial population surveys shows that annual growth has slowed to less than 1 percent since 2009.

In addition to the study area in the western U.P., a smaller moose population remains in the eastern U.P., found primarily in Alger, Schoolcraft, Luce and Chippewa counties.

No formal surveys of the eastern U.P. moose population have been conducted, but biologists have documented resident moose and reproduction in parts of the east U.P., based on field observations and reports from the public.

Moose are also found in Keweenaw County at Isle Royale National Park, a population managed by the National Park Service.

Why moose matter. Understanding the factors that limit the moose population is crucial for land and wildlife managers, as it provides insight into the broader ecological health of the Upper Peninsula. Furthermore, moose are culturally significant, as they are a symbol of Michigan's wilderness and an important species for the traditions and practices of Indigenous communities in the region.

Moose are the largest native deer species in Michigan and have a complex role in the ecosystem. As large herbivores, they shape the structure of forests through their feeding habits, which includes browsing on trees like aspen, birch and balsam fir.

"Both the presence and absence of moose can affect forest growth, creating cascading effects throughout the habitat, impacting deer, birds, insects and plant life," Petroelje said. "As a keystone species, moose have a disproportionate impact on their environment compared to most other species."

Researchers are looking at several hypotheses for what is limiting the Michigan moose population. Historically, the pregnancy rate has been lower than the North American average by about 13 percent.

The western U.P. population also has low rates of twin

calves being born, which can be a signal that the moose population is nearing the number that can be supported by the region's environment.

Parasites and disease are among the hypotheses for what is limiting the population as well. Brainworm is a lethal nematode carried by white-tailed deer. Although brainworm has little effect on white-tailed deer, it can cause a fatal neurological disease in moose.

Additionally, Michigan moose are at the southern edge of the moose range. Parasites and warmer temperatures may lead to increased stress and lower levels of reproduction.

"Moose are adapted to cold climates due to their large size and thick fur," said Brian Roell, a DNR wildlife biologist in Marquette. "The mixed forested areas with wetland complexes found in the Michigamme Highlands are ideal habitat."

Over the past decade, moose-vehicle collisions are more common. During the last three years alone, the DNR received reports of 47 moose being struck and killed by vehicles.

And though wolves are large enough to take down an adult moose, previous studies of moose survival in mainland Michigan show predation by wolves was not an important factor in adult moose mortality.

"However, predation has been found to be important to calf survival regionally, like in Minnesota, which is experiencing similar limited population growth," Petroelje said.

Though moose are considered a game species in Michigan, there has not been a moose hunting season since the 1800s. To support the continued growth of the population, the Moose Hunting Advisory Council recommended only allowing a moose hunt if the population maintains 3 percent annual growth.

By studying moose population trends and the challenges they face, wildlife managers can better understand the interconnectedness of species and ecosystems. This knowledge helps create better management strategies, ensuring that moose and the ecosystem at large thrive.

For more information on moose in Michigan, visit Michigan.gov/Moose.

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