The West Virginia Primary election concludes Tuesday, May 11.

And with less than a month to go, efforts are now in full swing.

Four members of the Building Trades are running for re-election.

Dave Walker is an Operating Engineer and is running in the Counties of Clay, Gilmer and Calhoun. Walker was elected two years ago for the first time and knows he has a tough race to get re-elected this time.

“I’m working hard to talk to working families about who I am,” said Walker.

Orphy Klempa, a member of the Carpenters, has served two terms in the House of Delegates and is now trying to get elected to the State Senate in the Counties of Ohio, Brooke and Hancock.

Klempa will face Hancock County Commissioner Dan Greathouse in the primary.

After much debate Congress has passed, and President Obama has signed, health care reform legislation.

The new law will be phased in over many years and has many components.

For those who have employer-sponsored health care coverage won at the bargaining table, the good news is you’ll keep it.

And perhaps just as important, companies who do not provide health care benefits to employees will be required to pay an additional tax starting in 2014.

One last minute adjustment that favored union construction workers was a change to the tax on high dollar plans.

The tax won’t start until 2018 and the limit was raised to only cover those plans worth more than $30,950 per year for family coverage and $11,850 for individuals. The amounts will increase with inflation. Stand-alone dental and vision plans are excluded from the tax.

For most other industries the tax is on plans costing $10,200 for individuals and $27,500 for family coverage.

Key to the legislation is the end of discriminatory practices by insurance companies. Denying coverage due to pre-existing conditions and coverage caps have been eliminated or severely limited.

While the plan is estimated to cost $940 billion over 10 years the same estimates call for savings due to increased participation in health plans.

An additional 30 million people will end up with insurance coverage ending one of the biggest factors in increased premiums for existing plans - paying for uncompensated care.

A tax credit will be available to small businesses who provide employee coverage starting in 2010. The credits are equal to 50% of the amount paid by a small employer for employee health coverage.

In 2014 both individuals and employers must meet certain requirements.

Individuals must obtain minimum essential coverage effective 2014 —hardship and religious exemptions are permitted.

Failure to obtain minimum essential coverage will result in a tax as follows: $325 in 2015; $695 in 2016 and beyond (indexed by a cost-of-living adjustment). The penalty amount will also be applied for any dependents that do not have minimum essential coverage.

Employers are not required to provide health insurance, but they are hit with a fee if the government subsidizes their workers’ coverage. The $2,000-per-employee fee would be assessed on the company’s entire workforce, minus an allowance.

Most small companies with less than 50 employees will be exempt from the tax, but in
THE WEST VIRGINIA STATE PIPE TRADES HELD THEIR SIXTEENTH ANNUAL APPRENTICESHIP CONTEST IN HUNTINGTON ON APRIL 5 – 8.

Apprentices from West Virginia and Maryland competed in welding, plumbing, pipefitting and HVAC categories.

The event was held at the training center of Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 521 in Huntington.

The winners go on to the regional contest held in Washington, DC later this year.

Apprentices who are in their fifth and final year of the program are eligible to compete.

The competition includes both hands-on challenges and written examinations.

Fourteen contestants from five locals, including Baltimore were at the event.

At the event were a number of industry displays including Lincoln Electric and retired member Scott Webb who had a display about backflow prevention and water-hammer arresters.

Also in attendance was Labor Commissioner Dave Mullins and UA International Representative T.L. Ranson.

An awards banquet was held on the last day where the winners were announced.

“Events like these also show the public how highly trained our membership is.”

According to Rucker next year’s contest will be held in Baltimore.

**APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE FOR NEW MILLWRIGHT LOCAL 1755 APPRENTICE CLASS**

**Millwright Local #1755 Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee is recruiting for a new class of Apprentices.**

The five year/10,000 hour program has paid on-the-job training as well as classroom instruction.

Included in the training are courses in mathematics, welding, a working knowledge of hand tools, power tools, bench & machine tools, training in engineering principles, optical instruments, safety and blueprint reading.

Applications must be filled out at one of the above dates, times and locations ONLY and in person. A $10 application fee is required.

Applicants must be at least 18 years of age, have a high school diploma or GED, satisfy the Committee they have sufficient education to take the related instruction, be physically able to perform the work of the trade and have proof of residency (i.e. drivers license or utility bill) within the jurisdiction of Local #1755, which includes: Wetzel, Tyler, Pleasants, Wood, Wirt, Ritchie, Calhoun, Jackson, Roane, Monongalia, Preston, Taylor, Barbour, Harrison, Tucker, Lewis, Upshur, Gilmer, Webster, Marion, Doddridge, Mason, Putnam, Logan, Mingo, McDowell, Wyoming, Mercer, Summers, Monroe, Greenbrier, Raleigh, Fayette, Nicholas, Boone, Kanawha, Clay, Braxton, Pocahontas and Randolph; and in Ohio: Washington and Athens.

Applicants need to bring a birth certificate, school transcript, resume and (for those with Military Service) a DD214.

All applicants will be required to pass a qualifying math and mechanical aptitude test in order to be scheduled for an interview.

A physical examination and substance abuse test will also be required.

All applicants will be considered without regard to race, color, religion, national and ethnic origin or sex.

For more information call Training Director Bill Boso at 304-422-7637, check their web site www.millwright1755.com or call the Local at 304-422-1593.
WEST VIRGINIA AFL-CIO COPE ENDORSEMENTS FOR THE MAY 11, 2010 PRIMARY

Supreme Court of Appeals
Thomas E. McHugh

U.S. House of Representatives
1st Congressional District: Alan Mollohan
3rd Congressional District: Nick Joe Rahall

State Senate
1st Orphy Klempa
2nd Larry Edgell
5th John Cummings
6th H. Truman Chafin
7th Jeff Eldridge
8th Richie Robb
9th Mike Green
10th Ronald Miller
11th C. Randy White
12th Joe Minard
13th Ron Justice
14th Steven Shafer

House of Delegates
1st Marilyn Boyd, Randy Swartzmiller
2nd Roy Givens, Alan Klein
3rd Shawn Fluharty, Eriika Storch
4th Michael Ferro, Scott Varner
5th Dave Pethel
9th Jim Marion
10th Dan Poling, John Ellem
12th Jo Bogcess Phillips
13th Dale Martin, Brady Paxton
14th Darrell Black, Cathy Larck
15th Carl Eastham, Jim Morgan, Matthew Woelfel
16th Doug Reynolds, Dale Stephens
17th Don Perdue, Richard Thompson
18th Larry Barker
19th Greg Butcher, Ted Ellis, Ralph Rodighiero, Josh Stowers
21st Harry Keith White
22nd Daniel J. Hall, Linda Goode Phillips
23rd Clif Moore
25th John Frazier
27th Mel Kessler, Virginia Mahan, Ricky Moye, Sally Susman, Bill Wooton
28th Thomas Campbell, Ray Canterbury
29th David Perry, Margaret Staggers
30th Bonnie Brown, Nancy Guthrie, Bobbie Hatfield, Mark Hunt, Doug Skaff Jr., Sharon Spencer, Danny Wells
31st Meshea Poore
32nd Scott Lavigne
33rd David Walker
34th Brent Boggs
35th Sam Argento
36th Joe Talbott
37th Paul “PJ” Louk
39th Bill Hamilton
40th Mary Poling
41st Frank “Chunki” Angotti Jr., Ron Fragale, Richard laquantia, Tim Miley
42nd Michael Manypenny
43rd Mike Caputo, Linda Longstreth, Tim Manchin
44th Stephen L. Cook, Barbara Fleischauer, Charlene Marshall
45th Larry Williams
46th Stan Shaver
49th Charles Messick
50th Ruth Rowan
52nd Mike Roberts
53rd Robert V. Mills
54th Walter Duke*
55th Donn E. Marshall
56th Terry L. Walker
57th Lorraine M. Rea
58th Tiffany Lawrence

County School Boards
Jackson County Board of Education – Steve Wedge*
Preston County Board of Education – Jason Hershman*

*No action was taken by COPE, however the Building Trades have endorsed.

When issues about the construction industry are discussed, these individuals do a great job of explaining a worker friendly position.”

ELECTION

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

in the primary but will face three opponents in the Fall. Last time he only won by a few votes and knows he has a tough race again.

Greg Butcher is a member of the Operating Engineers and is running in Logan and Lincoln County for the House of Delegates.

“Having members of the Building Trades in the legislature is very important to all working families but especially to other Trades workers,” said Steve White, ACT Director.

CRAFTS SHOW SKILLS AT EXPO

USING A WELDING simulator at the WV Construction & Design Exposition, better known as Expo, are members of the Iron Workers from West Virginia and Kentucky. The trade show event was held in March in Charleston. A number of crafts set up booths at the Expo to talk about training and apprenticeship.
Sheet Metal Workers Local 33 held an all day training for their first through fourth year apprentices in Morgantown last month.

The Apprentice Orientation was not the typical craft training but instead focused on other ways to be a successful and productive Sheet Metal Worker and union member.

Approximately 70 apprentices from the Charleston, North Central, Parkersburg and Wheeling Districts were in attendance along with Business Agents, Executive Board members and Organizers.

CONGRESSMAN ALAN MOLLOHAN talks with Sheet Metal Workers Local 33 apprentices at a Saturday, March 27 training session held in Morgantown.

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The day long session is held each year and covers a variety of topics.

Contractor representatives John Kalkrueth and John Trifonoff of Kalkrueth Roofing and Sheet Metal Inc., based in Wheeling, talked to the group about what it takes for both contractors and workers to be successful.

They went over expectations both sides have from collective bargaining agreements to job sites.

Congressman Alan Mollohan (D - First Congressional District) gave a presentation about a variety of important political issues including health care reform, the Employee Free Choice Act, the current jobs bill and the difficulties he faces when trying to extend unemployment benefits.

Kenny Perdue, President of the WV AFL-CIO and a Sheet Metal Worker, talked about the importance of being involved in local politics.

Sheet Metal apprentices are in a five year program where they get classroom training three times a year in one week blocks at the Parkersburg facility.

This program is in addition to their regular craft training but no less important.

“Our constitution requires an orientation for all aspects of membership,” said Randy Gombos, Organizer for Local 33. “To be well rounded you need to understand a contractor’s point of view as well as the politics that effect your job.”

Other topics covered were organizing, labor law and labor history.

According to Gombos the program was well received by the apprentices and he commended the Agents and Organizers for all of their hard work in putting together a successful Orientation.

Next year the training will focus on explaining benefit funds and how to manage personal finances.

HEALTH

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

the construction industry the definition for small employer is those ‘who employed an average of at least 5 full-time employees on business days during the preceding calendar year and whose annual payroll expenses exceed $250,000 for such preceding calendar year.’

Part-time workers are included in the calculations, counting two part-timers as one full-time worker.

“We have been trying to pass legislation requiring contractors on tax funded projects to show their employees have health care,” said Dave Efaw, Secretary-Treasurer of the WV State Building Trades. “The construction employer provision is key to help level the playing field for our contractors.”

A tax increase for individuals earning over $200,000 and joint filers earning over $250,000 will start in 2013.

The increase will effect the hospital insurance payroll tax by 0.9% and a 3.8% Medicare tax on investment income from interest, dividends, royalties, rents, gross income from a trade or business, and net gain from disposition of property.

In addition, the new law:

- Ends insurance companies’ most abusive practices, including denying coverage to people with pre-existing conditions, beginning in 2014 for adults, and this September for children.
- Eliminates annual and lifetime limits on benefits and ends discriminatory premiums for women and requires government review of excessive rate increases.
- Lowers health care costs for working families by creating new health insurance exchanges to increase competition and provides tax credits and cost-sharing assistance for middle- and lower-income families to purchase insurance.
- Helps seniors purchase prescription drugs, closes the Medicare prescription drug “donut hole” and ensures seniors get free preventive care.
- Allows dependent children to remain on their parents’ policies until age 26.