



TOOL TALK

A Publication of the Michigan Tooling Association

From Rob's Roost

by: Rob Dumont, Managing Director



Openings for MTA Members in Michigan Tooling Pilot Project

As you may already be aware, the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC) and the Center for Automotive Research (CAR) are launching a pilot project to help 24 Michigan tooling companies to reduce their costs and work collaboratively to win additional orders. The project runs from the middle of this month through the end of 2003. It includes:

- ❖ A confidential on-site assessment to establish performance baselines;
- ❖ On-site help to identify priority steps to reduce costs and improve response time in both the shop and office;
- ❖ Marketing and sales training; and
- ❖ Facilitated sessions to develop collaborative quotes for new tooling work.

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) has generously agreed to provide \$400,000, or 55% of the total project cost, in recognition of the importance of our sector to the state's economy. That means that each shop needs to pay only \$13,750 of the \$30,000-plus per-company cost.

Thirteen (13) Michigan tooling companies have already signed up. That means that 11 slots are still open. Under a special arrangement, these are being held open for MTA

members through Wednesday, May 14th. From 9 to 11 a.m. that morning, there will be a meeting at MTA's offices in Farmington Hills for members to learn more about, and to sign up for, participation in the project. We urge you to attend to learn more about what may be an opportunity to improve your top and bottom lines!

Please see "A Pilot Project for Michigan's Tooling Sector" fact sheet and reservation form for the May 14th meeting which are enclosed with the issue.

MTA Golf Outing One of the Longest Running Golfing Events In Michigan

MTA's 68th Annual Golf Outing & Dinner will be held on Thursday, June 26th at the Wolverine Golf Club in Macomb. This is a really special occasion for our members, their customers and colleagues as it is one of the longest running traditions in golf events in Michigan and also a great honor for the Association, which is celebrating its 70th anniversary this year.

The invitation and reservation forms are enclosed with this issue of *Tool Talk*. Please complete and return the reservation form asap; tables will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis.

There will be a shot-gun start, open bar at the clubhouse, lunch, beer and sodas on the course, and many golf gifts and prizes. This will be followed by hors d'oeuvres, dinner, open bar and many more prizes.

See the invitation for the stupendous prizes available at the highlight of the golf event - the "Hole-in-One" contest. I suggest you starting practicing your swing now; you won't want to miss out on this.

Tickets will be mailed out beginning on May 26th; the cost for golf and dinner is only \$175 per person; the cost for just the dinner event is \$80.00. You won't want to miss it - this promises to be our best golf outing yet. Be sure to come, you won't be disappointed - "Fore" sure.



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NOTE:

MTA Calendar of Events - May has been moved to page 2 for this month.

Members in the News

At its recent Board of Directors meeting, Joanne Gallagher was elected president of **Thunder Bay Manufacturing Co.** in Alpena, Michigan, effective January 1, 2003. Gallagher has been with Thunder Bay Manufacturing for 18 years, most recently holding the position of executive vice president.

The announcement was made by George A. LaFleche, chairman of the board of Thunder Bay Manufacturing. Other appointed positions include Georgene Hildebrand as vice president of administration, Bruce LaFleche as vice president of operations, and Todd Fowler as foundry superintendent.

Thunder Bay Manufacturing makes gray and ductile iron castings primarily for automotive use. The foundry has been located and operated in Alpena since 1919, and employs approximately 90 people in the area.

Welcome New Members!

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome the following new members to the Michigan Tooling Association.

A-1 Laser Die & Engineering, Inc. of Lowell, manufacturers of steel rule dies;

Ernest Industries of Westland, specializing in metal stamping & assemblies;

Fraser Fab & Machine, Inc. of Rochester Hills, CNC precision machining, fabricating MIG and TIG welding, prototypes and custom details specialists;



Lanzen Fabricating, Inc. of Roseville, and **Lanzen Fabricating North, Inc.** of Mancelona, specializing in heavy metal fabricating for defense mfg.;

PT Tech Stamping, Inc. of Fraser, specializing in prototype stampings;

Quality Induction of Fraser, specializing in induction coils and heat treat;

Schmald Tool & Die, Inc. of Burton, precision machining, sheet metal die build & plastic injection mold build specialists; and

Westech Corporation of North Muskegon, specializing in custom precision machining.

MTA Agency News



by: *Mark Tyler, General Manager
MTA Insurance Agency*

Don't be caught off guard!

With reservists being called to active duty and many returning shortly, keep yourself up-to-date on the different issues effecting these individuals who have been out serving our country.

The Department of Labor has laws and rules governing the leave and return of these service men and women. The DOL's website, www.dol.gov, has lots of pertinent information regarding these requirements. Also please refer to the article by the law firm of Raymond & Prokof, "Treatment of Employees Called to Active Duty", in the Feb. '03 **Tool Talk**.

Popping your Pill Bills

Three ways to reduce costs without risking your health:

❖ Cut pills in half. The price you pay for many drugs depends on the number of pills prescribed, not the dosage. "If your doctor says your medication can be cut in half, ask for pills at double the dose and split them in two," says pharmacist James Rybacki of the University of Maryland.

For example, a year's worth of the antidepressant Celexa at 20 mg daily cost you \$700. Cut 40 mg pills in half and you could save \$350.

❖ Look into "me too" brands. To find less expensive alternatives, visit www.Rxaminer.com. For a \$24.95 annual fee, you'll get a list of generic and brand-name options. Fax the list to your doctor, but don't compromise quality for savings, warns Rybacki.

❖ Find out about freebies. IMS Health, which tracks the drug industry, says companies last year provided doctors with nearly \$10 billion in free samples for patients. So before taking a prescription to the pharmacy, ask your doctor or the nurse if part of it can be "filled" on the spot for free.

MTA Calendar of Events - May

NOTE: All seminars & training programs this month are being held at the MTA Training Center in Farmington Hills unless otherwise noted.

- 14 **Business Seminar** -
A Pilot Project for Michigan's Tooling Sector
9:00 am - 11:00 am
- 15 Deadline for sending in items for **Tool Talk**
- 15 MTA Workers' Comp Fund Board of Trustees meets
- 21 MTA Board of Directors meets
- 21 **Safety Seminar** - Required MIOSHA Training
8:00 am - 11:30 am

MTA Staff Updates - Who to Contact and What They Do

During the last 9 months, there have been several changes in staff at the MTA and in their responsibilities. Most of you are probably familiar with them, but here is a little cheat-sheet you can keep at your desk for easy reference. Some of you may not know, but after 27 years of service at MTA, **Madelyn Sarich**, has retired. We all wish her well on her retirement and we understand she is having a great time so far with her grandkids, her ladies' clubs and her vacationing.

MTA Staff

Robert Dumont - Managing Director, ext. 1302, email to rob@mtaonline.com

Jerry Morrow - Controller, ext. 1308, email to jerry@mtaonline.com

Ron Mariutto - Tech Coordinator; Accounts Receivable, ext. 1306, email to ron@mtaonline.com

Elaine Burger-Laskosky - 401(k) Plan Administration Liaison with Freedom One; MTA Website Coordinator, ext. 1309, email to elaine@mtaonline.com

Mary Box - 401(k) Recordkeeping Wrap-Up; Receptionist, ext. 1300, email to mary@mtaonline.com

Pat Hoover - Medical Plans Supervisor; Editor of *Tool Talk*, ext. 1305, email to pat@mtaonline.com

MTA Insurance Agency Staff

Mark Tyler - General Manager, ext. 1313, email to mark@mtaonline.com

Stella Krupansky - Dental, Life and Disability Supervisor, ext. 1310, email to stella@mtaonline.com

The mailing addresses, phone numbers and fax numbers for the Association and the Agency are:

Michigan Tooling Association

P.O. Box 9151
Farmington Hills, MI 48333-9151
Telephone: 248-488-0300 or 800-969-9MTA
Fax: 248-488-0500

MTA Insurance Agency, LLC

P.O. Box 9151
Farmington Hills, MI 48333-9151
Phone: 248-489-8505 or 866-489-8505
Fax: 248-489-8436

You can also use the MTA website www.mtaonline.com for forms, such as the Auto Discount Program, Membership Applications and Group Forms. Contact Elaine for your PIN number to enter the "members only" areas. The website is currently undergoing major reconstruction to update it to the new changes at the Association, so we ask your patience at the present time, until that updating is, well, updated.

The names, phone and fax numbers, and mailing address for the **MTA Workers' Compensation Fund** are on page 4 of the article "**From the Desk of Gary Wood**".

Surveying the Surveys

Spring has sprung up and so have the MTA surveys. Enclosed with this issue you will find:

❖ The semi-annual **Business Outlook Survey** - in which members forecast where their industry is headed in the next six months. As always, we especially look forward to your comments.

❖ The **Fourth of July Holiday Survey** - which will compile what members are scheduling for the fourth.

Please take a few minutes to fax to us your take on these surveys to 248-488-0500. Results will be published in next month's **Tool Talk**.

❖ The annual **Hourly and Salaried Wage Surveys** for 2003 were mailed out to all participating members at the end of April. If you did not receive your copy, please contact Ron Mariutto at 248-488-0300, ext. 1306 or email to ron@mtaonline.com.

❖ The annual **Personnel Practices Survey** for 2003 will be mailed out to all members in June. If you have any questions or categories that you wish to see included, please contact Ron at the above numbers. Your suggestions are very important because we want this survey to reflect the working conditions and concerns that are most meaningful to you.

From the Desk of Gary Wood

Administrator MTA Workers' Comp Fund

Staffing Update



It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm we announce several staffing changes to the MTA Workers' Compensation Fund.

The Trustees at their April 17, 2003 meeting recognized Donna Motley for her immediate contributions to the Fund by appointing her to fill the position of Claim Manager. We all welcome Donna to this position and are assured that you will find her knowledgeable and capable in this role. Thank you Donna for your fine work and ongoing assistance in the daily operation of the Fund.

The Fund also enjoyed the addition of two loss control consultants to work with the members. Ray Duff and Chris Demeter were hired to assist Bill Hoke in accomplishing the loss control goals of the Fund. If you are a Fund member and you need assistance in the area of loss control, please contact Bill, Ray or Chris. Ray and Chris are primarily involved in the Detroit metropolitan area with Bill generally covering the rest of the state.

You may not be aware that Chris Doebler is continuing with the Fund as an accounting consultant. Chris is doing the monthly accounting and some computer chores related to the management of the data from 28 years of Fund operation. The Fund actuary has already put his knowledge of the database to use in beginning to prepare for the 2004 Fund year.

Some of the mail, calls and faxes to the Fund are misdirected to the MTA. You are requested to make sure your mail is directed to:

Michigan Tooling Association
Workers' Compensation Fund
P. O. Box 9150
Farmington Hills, MI 48333-9150

The Fund's telephone numbers are 248-488-1172 and 800-274-5606. The Fund's fax is 248-488-1980.

Please note the updated staff assignments:

Claims Staff

Donna Motley, Claim Manager	Ext. 1011
Cindy Jackson, Indemnity Claim Adjuster	Ext. 1009
Marci Merath, Claim Technician	Ext. 1005
Linda Murphy, Indemnity Claim Adjuster	Ext. 1007
Denise Peraino, Medical Claim Adjuster	Ext. 1004

Loss Control

Bill Hoke, Loss Control Coordinator	Ext. 1104
Mobile Phone	231-250-1977
Ray Duff, Loss Control Consultant	248-444-0863
Chris Demeter, Loss Control Consultant	517-230-0937

Premium Accounting

Glenda Moyle, Premium Accounting Mgr.	Ext. 1315
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Administration

Gary Wood, Fund Administrator	Ext. 1316
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Trustee News

The number of employers increased again through the first quarter. There are now 486 new members versus the 463 in 2002. The 2002 payroll audit is progressing with a scheduled completion in mid-May. There is still a nagging decrease in reported payrolls for 2002 due to the economic conditions.

Something must be going on as far as business is concerned. As a bellwether of economic conditions, I keep an eye on the number of new claims that are being submitted (the theory being you have to have people working to have claims). January was on a par with 2002, but February and March have both reported increased claims activity not quite consistent with 2000 but just beginning to exceed 2001.

There were 2840 claims in 2000; 1985 claims in 2001; and 1926 claims in 2002.

What does that mean? You have more people working; you are working the people you have on longer shifts; your people are not adhering to safety standards; or just plain dumb bad luck. Whatever it is, I am keeping an eye on where we are headed. If you have more people working or you are working longer shifts, the trend is a function of volume. If your people are not following the safety standards, that is another thing that we need to work on immediately to correct.

The Fund is lining up to add another group of new members. We welcome **Lanzen Fabricating, A-1 Laser Die** and **PT Tech** during March. At this time, we are still counting for April but it appears that we will have six or seven new members to welcome at month end.

If your company is not in the Fund and you are interested in a quote, please give me a call or send an email to me at (gary@mtaonline.com). If you were with us before, or have never been quoted, you could be surprised at the savings available to your company. If you prefer to deal through

your agent, have them give me a call. We operate on the strength of our numbers; if there are more of us working toward the same goal, it serves us all.

Please remember that the Trustees welcome your comments and input; please direct any correspondence to: Gary Wood, Fund Administrator, MTA Workers' Compensation Fund, P. O. Box 9150, Farmington Hills, MI 48333-9150.

P.S. Buy American Made

40-hour General Site Worker. Depending on what your workers respond to, they may need this type of training.

Other Training:

Every company should provide their workers with *Right to Know / HAZCOM* training for any materials within the workplace.

If you have workers wearing respirators they should have *Respiratory Protection* training along with their annual physicals and fitness testing.

Confined Space training is required if there are any permit-required confined spaces that are entered by any worker.

New ways to help train your workers by saving time and money:

The problem with training is finding the time to get everyone trained. Often training becomes expensive and requires travel. Some classes need to be instructor-led and have to be scheduled. Employee grievances and lost-time accidents help to drive the need for regular training within your facility.

Computer-based or on-line training holds many advantages over the traditional course training. On-line training provides one-to-one interaction with the curriculum; course content is updated as standards and regulations change; courses can be taken during worker down time; and best of all, the courses are ready when you are.

Properly trained workers are more productive, safer, and happier. Workers benefit from learning at their own pace; they can take courses in small increments and have immediate feedback on their performance.

Employers are able to customize the courses, comply with OSHA and other recognized standards, keep permanent training records for each worker, and these courses are less expensive than traditional courses.

For a listing of all the available on-line courses offered by BDN, check out our website at www.bdnihc.com. There are currently over 60 courses offered on-line.



Editor's note: Julie's email address was misprinted last month. You can email Julie Callaway at Jcallaway@bdnihc.com.

Safety Talk with Safe-T-Rex

*By: Julie Callaway, Chief Operations Officer
BDN Industrial Hygiene Consultants, Inc.*

Employee Training: It pays to have trained employees

In fiscal year 2001, OSHA consultants made more than 27,000 site visits to small employers. With the economy the way it is, many companies are seeking to cut costs. However, companies cannot afford to cut costs around employee training. Untrained employees mean safety violations and litigation.

Last year, OSHA provided more than 260,000 workers and employers safety and health training. Most industrial regulations require health and safety training for workers. Management is responsible for ensuring that employees are kept up to date with health and safety training.

Let's look at what type of training is out there:

Asbestos:

If you have asbestos containing materials in your facility and have workers working in and around those materials, they should have up to a 2-hour *Asbestos Awareness* training. If you have workers repairing pipe insulation or other materials containing asbestos, then further training is required, as well as State of Michigan licensing.

Lead:

Does your facility have painted surfaces? Does the paint chip or chalk off? If the paint contains lead and you have workers working in and around it, they should have a *Lead Awareness* course.

Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPR):

Classes range from First Responder, Operations Level to

Legislative Update

by: *Judy Augenstein*
Legislative Consultant, Lansing

Governor Granholm's 2003-2004 budget contained painful cuts as promised, but the cuts for local governments and higher education did not go as deep as anticipated. Granholm has restored the basic per pupil grant to \$6,700 after cutting it earlier this year. Schools still face cuts in other spending categories, but preserving the foundation grant was a big surprise.

For the governor to balance the budget, she is depending on state employees to take pay, insurance and pension concessions. Some legislators have voluntarily agreed to take a 3% pay cut to mirror the cuts state employees are being asked to take.

Both Democrats and Republicans have vowed to work together on the budget and other legislative issues. Freshman Rep. Tom Casperson (R-Escanaba), a log truck operator, told his colleagues that now is the time for lawmakers to review burdensome regulations that are hurting Michigan businesses.

The Senate Commerce & Labor Committee has been hearing testimony from industry on the competitiveness issue and how the dumping of foreign parts is impacting manufacturing. **Two Michigan Tooling Association members** from the western part of the state testified specifically on how the tool and die industry is being impacted. Legislation leading to tax exemptions and other incentives for manufacturers most likely will be generated by members of the Commerce & Labor Committee.

The new Joint Select Committee on Business Competitiveness is holding meetings around the state in an effort to gain information from Michigan manufacturers on how foreign manufacturing is impacting Michigan. You are encouraged to attend and give testimony at the various state wide meetings. For details, call 517-373-7670.

Rep. Kooiman (R-Grand Rapids) has requested **MTA** to work with him and other key legislators to develop specific legislation to assist in addressing the competitiveness issue from the tool and die industry perspective.

It appears we have the attention of the legislature on this issue; we must follow up with them and make the best of the opportunity.

The House has passed a bill that would allow up to 300 new charter schools sponsored by state universities, to be authorized over the next ten years. Currently, state law allows 150 charter schools to be sponsored by state universities, a limit that was reached several years ago, not long after the legislation authorizing charter schools was signed into law.

Legislation requested by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan has been introduced. The legislation would allow BCBSM to stifle competition and narrow choice for small businesses struggling to afford health insurance. Small business interests are lobbying to address the problems of BCBSM without hurting small business.



Governor Jennifer Granholm opened the first meeting of the Land Use Leadership Council, held on March 24th. The Council is charged with making recommendations on how to resolve land use issues.

The governor was greeted with a standing ovation from the council and others crowding the hearing room. Granholm opened the initial session telling the group that they had a difficult task before them. The Council will meet on a monthly basis and provide a report with recommendations by August. She stated that the issue of how to resolve land use has sat on the shelf too long and that the issue is not one of non-use of land, but the wise use of land.

Modern Definitions:

An engineer - a person who knows a great deal about very little and who goes along knowing more and more about less and less until finally he/she knows practically everything about nothing (can anyone say "Dilbert").

A salesman - a person who knows very little about a great deal and keeps knowing less and less about more and more until he/she knows practically nothing about everything.

A purchasing agent - starts out knowing practically everything, but ends up knowing nothing about anything, due to his/her association with engineers and salesmen.

Economic Talk – The Dana Viewpoint

by: Mike Dana, CEO
Dana Investment Advisors, Inc.

The Compassionate War

Is that an oxymoron? Not in this case. Coalition forces have bent over backwards and at increased risk to their own lives to limit civilian casualties and damage to infrastructure. At the same time they were fighting Saddam's soldiers, the coalition forces were providing aid to injured POWs and civilians. Never in history has a war been fought in this manner.

Technologies developed in a free entrepreneurial society have made this possible.... and the rebuilding process can begin. That will lift a huge weight off the American public and the economy. Psychologically it will lift the spirits of consumers and corporations to the point where we can get on with the business of America.

This relief, coupled with the tax cuts and low interest rates, should be enough to get us moving again. There are still excesses to be worked off in the economy, but these are isolated and will not negatively impact the overall recovery.

Many analysts are comparing the current economic and stock market environment to post 1929 or post 1972. The major difference this time is that equities are much more engrained in the investor psyche than those two past periods. What this means is that the return to common stocks

will be more rapid. Keep in mind that we are already three years into the bear market/correction.

This does not mean a return to the market of the 1990s. This will be a slower recovery with more potholes along the way. October 2002 still appears to have been the bottom in the market slide; however, selectivity is still cautioned.

Technology continues to push new frontiers. That is evident not only in Iraq, but here at home where the focus is already on post war economic developments. The new frontier in technology today is quite likely in wireless computing. To many, the economy may seem in the doldrums, but to the few visionaries there has never been a more exciting time with unlimited opportunities.

It is a market that doesn't exist yet, but the mantra is "build it and they will come." Last June, the Open Mobile Alliance was created to make sure that the technological architecture of this new vision would be an open network where data, voice and video can be passed among many telecommunications carriers and devices. The broader impact of all these advances, of course, is that it opens up communication around the planet and hopefully leads to a greater understanding and compassion amongst nations than currently exists.

It must be spring. The smell of hot dogs and sushi fills the air. Yes, baseball season has begun, and CBS has already predicted that four teams have been mathematically eliminated. Not only that, but the NHL and NBA are in their playoffs... Hope springs eternal and the country could use a good dose of optimism right now.

Every generation seems to have its own "end of the age of innocence" period. Those who grew up in the 1920s saw their innocence end with the depression. Those who grew up in the 1960s saw their innocence cut short by JFK's assassination and the Vietnam War. This generation of course is losing their innocence through the three year bear market and the war in Iraq. Nothing dire about this, as it brings us back into reality; and, in effect, sets the stage for the next generation. Each new generation brings new enthusiasm and vision that propels us into the future.

Archaeologists are extremely pleased that we did little damage to the landscape in Iraq. In recent years, past civilizations have been unearthed, and it appears that civilization sprang up six thousand years ago in the area between the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers - the land known as Sumeria. With Hussein gone, we should be able to discover more about our past and thus create a map to our future.

More Modern Definitions:

A committee - a group of people who, individually, can do nothing, but collectively can meet and decide that nothing can be done; or a group of people who succeed in getting something done when, and only when, it consists of three members, one of whom happens to be sick and one of whom is absent.

A committee is also defined as a collection of the unfit, chosen from the unwilling, by the incompetent, to do the unnecessary.



The Marketplace

Equipment for Sale:

Turning Centers:

- Mazak model quick turn 30N, CNC turning center, 1998
- Mazak model quick turn 30N, CNC turning center, 1997
- Mazak model quick turn 28U, universal CNC turning center, 1989
- Mazak model quick turn 28N, universal CNC turning center, 1996
- Mazak model multiplex 620 Mark II, CNC turning & milling center, 1996
- Mazak model super quick turn 10MS, twin spindle CNC turning center, 1996
- Mazak model super quick turn 10MS, twin spindle CNC turning center, 1995
- Mazak model quick turn 8N, universal CNC turning center, 1986

Vertical Machining Centers:

- Mazak model AJV-405N, CNC vertical machining center, 1993
- Mazak model AJV-405N, CNC vertical machining center, 1991

Horizontal Machining Centers:

- Mazak model ultra 650, CNC horizontal machining center, 1995
- Mazak model ultra 650, horizontal machining center, 1999
- Mazak model ultra 650, horizontal machining center, 1999
- Mazak Model Mazatech H-630N, CNC horizontal machining center, 1994

Contact: Joe, Jamie, Larry, Richard Gibbs, or Herb @ Gibbs Machinery Co.
sales@gibbsmachinery.com; 586-755-5353.

Personnel Available:

Sr. Financial Executive seeks position utilizing experience in all aspects of fiscal control, mergers and acquisitions, financial analysis, economic trends, macro sales, forecasting and product costing systems and operations improvements. Experienced in financial leadership and achieving financial performance through strategic planning as finance director and corporate controller. Ask for **Resume 03-05.**



Inflation Talk

CPI-W Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers

Month	82-84	1967	57-59
March	180.3	537.1	624.6*
February	179.2	533.7	620.8*
Jan 2003	177.7	529.2	615.6*
Dec 2002	177.0	527.2	613.2*
Nov	177.4	528.4	614.5*
Oct	177.3	528.2	614.2*
Sept	177.0	527.3	613.2*
August	176.6	526.0	611.8*

CPI-U All Urban Consumers

Month	82-84	1967	57-59
March	184.2	551.8	641.7*
February	183.1	548.5	637.9*
Jan 2003	181.7	544.2	633.0*
Dec 2002	180.9	541.9	630.2*
Nov	181.3	543.1	631.6*
Oct	181.3	543.2	631.6*
Sept	181.0	542.1	630.6*
August	180.7	541.2	629.5*

Note: March CPI-W represents a 3.2% increase from one year ago; CPI-U a 3.0% increase.

* Base Year 1957-59 is no longer released. BLS has issued the following conversion factors from the 82-84 year:

CPI-W - .2886674 CPI-U - .2870447

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Send to MTA - Attention: **Tool Talk Editor**