



TOOL TALK

A Publication of the Michigan Tooling Association

From Rob's Roost

by: *Rob Dumont,*
Managing Director



PLENTY TO DO!

The MTA list of Endorsed Service Providers appears monthly on the back page of Tool Talk and this month we are removing four of the previously endorsed providers. The list is intended as a benefit to the membership in that any provider so listed has been reviewed by MTA to ensure both the quality and competitive price of the goods or services offered. The theory is that if they gain the status of Endorsed Provider you, the member, can rely upon them as being at the forefront of their peer group. In order to ensure the validity of a listing we periodically review both offerings and performance by the provider.

Gone from the list this month are HERTZ (you can do as well or better with HERTZ without any endorsement by or connection to MTA); Lower Electric (the alternative energy market in Michigan is "dead" due to the re-regulation of the industry); Office Depot (the difficulties with taking advantage of your MTA affiliation far outweigh any benefit to be had); and, Total Energy Company the energy auditor (a totally inactive effort).

We are currently reviewing possible additions to the list. Stay tuned!

A Notice went out that we have scheduled a repeat performance of the Bankruptcy and Lien Act seminar for February 23rd at 9:00 a.m. at the Durant-Dort Office Building in Flint (316 Water St.). Response has been very good for this seminar

so if you want to get in please fax us with details using the brochure included with this edition. Space is limited!

I have, together with others similarly interested (Domestic Manufacturers Group) been actively working on a bill that addresses the issue of currency manipulation by foreign governments, most notably, China. We recently met in Washington and I believe we are making some progress. As is usually the case, the effort will take time, I will keep you posted.

In addition I have been looking into Border Tax Adjustments and their trade impact, see the article reproduced from the American Producers Council's recent meeting.

The MTA website has seen many improvements during the last year or so. You can contribute to that effort by utilizing the site and taking an active role in the discussion areas. There are multiple opportunities for you to vent, express an opinion, pose a question, get information and/or help. The possibilities are really limited only by the imagination or ingenuity of those who participate. The site is there for your use.

Detroit, indeed all of Michigan, can be rightfully proud of the success of the effort in hosting Super Bowl XL! Many publications are currently running articles on how to keep the momentum going and maintain the many improvements realized. Attitude has been very positive, hopefully we can keep all those improvements in place and actually build on them!

Do what you feel in your heart to be right—for you'll be criticized anyway. You'll be damned if you do, and damned if you don't.

—Eleanor Roosevelt

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MTA Calendar of Events—February 2006

Remember to visit the Calendar on the MTA website at www.mtaonline.com for details and up-to-date information.

- 15 MTA Board of Directors meets
- 16 MTA WCF Board of Trustees meets
- 23 MTA & Raymond & Prokop sponsored seminar:
"A Primer on Bankruptcy"
9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Held at the Durant-Dort Office Bldg., Flint

Mark's Remarks

by: Mark Tyler, General Manager
MTA Insurance Agency



Creditable Coverage Notice to CMS— March 31, 2006 Deadline

Under the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA), most entities that currently provide prescription drug coverage to Medicare Part D eligible individuals must disclose to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) whether the coverage is “creditable prescription drug coverage” (Disclosure Notice).

An entity is required to provide the Disclosure Notice through completion of the disclosure form on the CMS Creditable Coverage Disclosure Web Page at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/creditablecoverage>. This method of transmission is convenient and will take minimal time to complete, and is the sole method for compliance with the requirement.

The Disclosure Notice must be made to CMS on an annual basis, and upon any change that affects whether the drug coverage is creditable. All entities who currently provide prescription drug coverage, regardless of whether they are applying for the drug subsidy or not, must complete this notification. The initial Disclosure Notice must be provided by March 31, 2006.

Further details on the regulatory requirements, creditable coverage disclosure form, manner of disclosure, and who must provide the information to CMS can be obtained from the CMS web site <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/creditablecoverage>.

BCBS/BCN Letter going to groups about validating Medicare information. Groups asked to respond by March 1.

To ensure that members' future Medicare claims are not delayed due to outdated data, BCBSM is asking about 10,000 groups to validate their members' Medicare information.

A test run was conducted to compare existing Medicare enrollment information in BCBSM's files with information maintained in a new database which the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services will use effective April 1, 2006. The new database will allow for a smoother, more efficient sharing of Medicare claims data between providers, CMS and health care benefit providers like Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan.

The comparison found that information for about 13,000 members files did not match the information contained in the CMS database.

If all of the information does not match beginning April 1, 2006, CMS will be unable to automatically forward Medicare claims to BCBSM. This may delay the processing of members' Medicare claims.

Action required by groups

BCBSM is sending a **letter** to those groups with members who need to validate their Medicare enrollment information. The letter contains the name of the member(s) along with the Medicare information in BCBSM's files.

Groups are being asked to validate **by March 1, 2006** the following information:

- The member's health insurance contract number printed on his or her Medicare ID card;
- The effective date for the member's Medicare Part A and Medicare Part B coverage printed on his or her Medicare ID card;
- The first six letters of the member's last name;
- The first letter of the member's first name;
- The member's birth date; and
- The member's gender (“1” indicates male; “2” indicates female).

If the information matches

If the information the member provides **matches** the information in the letter, the group should advise the member that he or she must validate the information by visiting their local Social Security office. BCBSM nor the group can correct the information in the CMS database.

If the information does not match

If the new information the member provides **does not match** the information in the letter, groups must make any necessary updates to the Medicare information via the usual process:

- Submit updated *Enrollment Change of Status* forms to our Group Billing department

Once BCBSM has received the group's updated Medicare information, they will correct their files and provide Medicare with the updated information.

Medicare law requirement

BCBSM is required under federal Medicare law to process member Medicare claims for up to two years after a member has left their group or become deceased. As a result, it is still necessary for groups to validate Medicare information for those members listed in the letter who are no longer employed by the group or are deceased.

In addition, if a group is no longer enrolled with BCBSM, updated Medicare information on the group's members is still required. Updated information should be submitted to BCBSM on the paper form enclosed with their letter.

Don't Miss R&D Tax Saving Opportunities

by: *Andy Walker, Monetek, LLC*

For 25 years, the largest Michigan manufacturers have evaluated their technology and manufacturing expenditures to identify those that can be both deducted and also used to support a claim for research and development (R&D) tax credits. R&D credits further reduce a company's tax liability on a dollar for dollar basis.

Small- and mid-sized companies in the metalworking and tooling industries often have not taken advantage of this opportunity, mistakenly believing they are not conducting qualifying R&D or underestimating the amount of their R&D. Still other such companies think that they do not qualify for R&D credits if they have already deducted their R&D costs.

What qualifies today?

If your company does any of the following, it should consider whether it is overlooking these credits:

- Designs tools, jobs, molds or dies
- Develops software used in tool making
- Makes machines or finishes a product
- Makes tools that are customized for clients
- Develops lean manufacturing such as by reducing scrap, labor hours, etc.
- Provides design, development or engineering services
- Regularly attempts using new materials
- Attempts increasing sales based on new technologies
- Develops prototypes and models including computer generated models
- Decreases environmental emissions and effluents or performs related testing
- Improves package design
- Applies for patents

What is the tax credit potential?

Companies that are more than 20 years old use one set of rules to determine their R&D expenditures that can be converted into tax credits. Newer companies are governed by different rules. The current federal credit alone can reach 6.5 percent of a company's total qualified R&D-related wages and supplies consumed, and 65 percent of what is paid to contractors who provide R&D services to a company.

These credits reduce a company's tax liability in the tax year they are incurred. Unused credits can be carried forward for 20 years.

For example, Company A has \$20 million in gross receipts, uses technology in its operations and can qualify \$1 million (five percent) of its expenditures as R&D (this percentage varies by industry and company). Assuming a few other variables are addressed favorably, the annual credit could total

\$65,000. Many companies can also claim R&D tax credits in three previous tax years and amend their returns to get refunds. In this example, Company A could receive a total of \$260,000 in credits for the current and three past tax years.

How does an R&D tax credit program work?

A comprehensive R&D tax credit program will first identify a company's qualifying R&D activities and then find the people involved, the supplies consumed and contractors used for each activity.

Some employees' participation in qualifying R&D activities is obvious, like product designers and software programmers; many others are not. Often overlooked as an R&D participant is the CEO who is involved in product development decisions and works to make the company's manufacturing processes more efficient. Other commonly missed R&D-involved employees are plant managers and plant floor level employees working on trials and making the manufacturing process more efficient.

The role of the technical investigator

Some R&D consulting firms use engineers and other technical professionals to interview clients' technical personnel to comprehensively identify R&D activities. This method has several benefits over traditional reliance on the financial records of a company to identify its R&D. Technical investigators can identify more qualifying activities, which leads to more qualifying expenditures and credits.

And, when the technical investigator does a technical write-up of each R&D activity, the firm has a detailed record to help support the credits claimed should they ever be challenged.

Timing considerations

Time may be of the essence in claiming R&D tax credits because the right to take credits in the 2002 tax year may be expiring March 15, 2006.

Many accountants advise their clients to include filing of R&D tax credits within the original annual return so the company does not have to file an amendment. And most companies want to conduct one comprehensive R&D project that covers all open tax years rather than to do one year at a time.

So if claiming R&D credits is attractive, it makes sense to start the process as soon as possible to ensure filing is complete by the tax deadlines and no credits are lost.

Andy Walker is the President of Monetek, LLC, a consulting firm with offices in Bloomfield Hills and Grand Rapids. Monetek works with a wide range of clients and their tax accountants on new R&D tax credit programs and ways to enhance existing programs. Andy Walker may be reached at 248-647-2233 or e-mail to asw@monetek.com.

From the Desk of Gary Wood

MTA WCF Administrator



February 2005: “GM’s chief economist predicts a healthier 2005 in the January 20 front page of the *Oakland Business Review* publication.”

February 2006: “GM struggles to maintain market share in the face of increased costs and shrinking demand for their product offerings.”

Well, so much for GM’s economic theory; does that guy still have a job? If he does it certainly can only be attributed to the management theory of: “only keep people around you that tell you what you want to hear (and pay them well to do so).” The poor folks that bolt the gas sucking behemoths together are expendable but we must keep around those that tell us we are wonderful. It brings to mind the fairy tale about the King’s new clothes.

It was pointed out to me the other day that I spend too many column inches boring you with my theories; I apologize and from now on will try to stick just to the facts.

Fund News

The Trustees have re-elected Richard Smith (**Wolverine Bronze**) as the Chairperson, Bobby Cox (**Acorn Stamping**) as the Vice-Chairperson and Kurt Heuser (**Bokum Tool**) as the Treasurer of the Fund for 2006.

The Fund started the year with fairly good results. There were some agents and others that were fueling a misunderstanding that we were in trouble because we terminated a few members that were costing the rest of the members money.

The total Fund participation is now 460 members which returns the group to the total membership of just several years ago. The premium volume is still almost \$13,500,000. The Fund has accepted a new excess carrier to provide the required specific and aggregate coverage at a cost more in line with the market.

The Fund’s bill review system has been moved to another vendor at the request of the new excess carrier. The new vendor has worked very closely with the excess carrier in the past and has offered a cost basis similar to the most recent provider.

The Trustees have again directed the staff to maintain a watchful vigilance of the loss numbers and values. We have begun to again review all members seeking trends and evaluating statistics in an attempt to drive down the cost of losses and the cost of the Fund to the members.

If you have a loss or safety problem and you know it, please work with us to help you remain a viable Fund member. The Trustees are not indiscriminately terminating members; they only take action against those members who have cost the rest of the Fund members money.

The Fund is interested in growing to and beyond the previous level. At the beginning of 2005 I listened to our economist friend (first paragraph) and dreamed of the Fund surpassing 500 members and obtaining a loss ratio of less than 50%.

The sad fact is that it is harder to find prospective members that qualify for participation based on the somewhat restrictive rules developed by the State of Michigan.

You must first qualify by the type of business.

Second, you need to have been in business for three years.

Third, you must qualify financially with current assets in excess of current liabilities and positive owners’ equity.

The Fund Trustees and the excess carrier are always vigilant of the losses of prospective members. We do not enroll members who have trended losses that exceed their premium contribution.

In spite of these barriers to growth we are studying every conceivable venue to improve the product MTA WCF provides to the members.

Last comment for the month includes an announcement that Mr. Ray Duff, our second longest serving loss control representative has left the MTA WCF to explore opportunities with another employer. For those of you in Ray’s territory, you were fortunate to have his services while he was with the Fund. My personal thanks to him for a job well done and best wishes for the future. Bill Hoke is now interviewing prospects for filling Ray’s territory. If you have any questions, please call Bill until such time as new staff is brought on board and trained.

So, have a great February (after all it is only 28 days). If you read this before Valentine’s Day, remember Mom because: “When Mom’s happy, everyone’s happy!”



On the Road with Bill Hoke

MTA WCF Loss Control Coordinator



History in the Making!

On January 19, 2006 history was made when the Michigan Tooling Association Workers Compensation Fund entered into an "Alliance" with the Consultation, Education and Training Division of the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Now before you lock your doors and remove your address off the front of your building, let me tell you how this will ultimately affect you.

First, it is our common belief that the safety and well being of employees in this state is the number one priority. To help facilitate this we have entered into this agreement. What we are hoping to do is, first, make our members aware of services available that they are already paying for. For example, did you know that through the CET Division you can have a MiOSHA consultant survey your shop with no citations or fines involved? Of course you would need to make any corrections to deficiencies noted, but the important point is you have had the MiOSHA visit with no worry of fines, citations or worry. Secondly, by working with CET you will be recognized by MiOSHA, as well as the MTA WCF, as a participant of the Alliance program and will be presented with a certificate of participation. This certificate can then be placed in a prominent area for all to see, including any future compliance employee.

In addition to the walkthrough type service, did you know that the CET Division will help you evaluate occupational health issues by providing air and sound level testing. They have also pledged to assist our members by providing seminars over the next three years geared toward issues that we face, such as press safety, hazardous energy control and other topics to be selected as the alliance continues. We have already had companies come on board with this program as well as a number of members who have taken advantage of these services in the recent past.

I personally have met with our CET contact and we are currently working on safety materials that will be utilized in upcoming seminars. Talking about safety related materials, I hope by now all of you have signed up for the free CD developed for you by MiOSHA. If you have not, please take a few minutes now to go on line and order your copy. It is free and believe me well worth the time and effort it will take to obtain your copy. To order to go: www.oshawalkthrough.com/register.html. The compact disk contains 22 modules of safety and health training; again this was developed for you by MiOSHA in an effort to assist you in the required training for your employees.

Would you like to be a part of this program? Be the first in your neighborhood to take advantage of these services and receive the "Certificate of Participation". For more information call your MTA WCF Loss Control Consultant:

Bill Hoke @ 231-250-1977

Chris Demeter @ 517-230-0937



In Memoriam

It is with deep sadness and regret that we note the passing of George Tann on February 1, 2006 at the age of 88. George was the owner of Tann Corporation and Congress Tool & Die with over 55 years experience in the tooling business. He will be remembered for his dedication to the tool and die industry and for his honesty in his personal life as well as his business life.

George was well known as a supportive and active member of MTA serving many years on the Board of Directors, various committees, and attending numerous events and meetings over the years. He was the President of the MTA Board of Directors from 1958-1962.

George Tann had an unusual gift for helping others to solve issues and problems, and he will be missed by all who knew him, admired him, and loved him.

Charitable contributions may be made in his name to the American Heart Association, 24445 Northwestern Hwy., Suite 100, Southfield, MI 48075, phone 1-800-242-8721; or to the Beaumont Pediatric Leukemia Fund, 3577 W. 13 Mile Rd, Suite 101, Royal Oak, MI 48073.

Our sincere condolences go out to his family and friends.

The US Needs Border Adjusted Federal Tax Reform to Restore Competitive Cost of American Goods at Home and Abroad

from: *The American Producers Council*

The Problem

The federal tax code places American producers at a major competitive cost disadvantage in both U.S. and foreign markets. U.S. goods sold in foreign markets are assessed with foreign value added taxes (VATs) without any offsetting relief from U.S. taxation. Conversely, foreign goods sold in the U.S. receive abatement of these VATs, without offsetting assessment of U.S. taxes.

The Magnitude of Border Adjusted Taxes

Every major industrialized country except the United States collects a large portion of its revenues from border adjusted taxes. These taxes are imposed on imports into those countries and rebated on exports from those countries at the following rate:

- VAT rates in the European Union range from 15% to 25%
- China has a 17% VAT
- Canada has a harmonized Goods and Services Tax and Sales Tax rate of 15%
- Mexico has a 15% VAT
- Japan has a 5% consumption tax, plus tariffs

The average of all OECD competitors VATs and equivalent border adjusted taxes is 18% levied on the value of traded goods.

The Effect on Competitive Price of U.S. Goods

The effect on cost (and therefore, selling price) for a U.S. based producer compared to a typical OECD based producer with comparable domestic cost prior to border adjustment at the average OECD VAT rate is shown by the following example:

<u>Selling to:</u>	<u>U.S. Market</u>	<u>Foreign Market</u>
U.S. Factory:		
Cost, incl U.S. taxes	\$1.00	\$1.00
VAT, Added (Rebated)	<u>0</u>	<u>.18</u>
Selling Price	\$1.00	\$1.18
OECD Foreign Factory:		
Cost, incl domestic taxes	\$1.00	\$1.00
VAT, Added (Rebated)	<u>(.15)</u>	<u>*</u>
Selling Price	\$.85	\$1.00

(*VATs rebated offset by VATs assessed on average)

The comparison demonstrates that VATs provide the foreign producer (or an American producer relocated abroad) an insurmountable price advantage over the U.S. producer, who typically averages less than 5% profit margin on sales.

The Impact on U.S. Producers is Unsustainable

As a consequence of the effective price imbalance due to border adjusted taxation, the U.S. manufacturing sector's share of the GDP has declined over 50%, principally due to inability to compete with foreign producers and U.S. production relocated abroad. The U.S. currently has a trade deficit in goods exceeding 6% of GDP, reflecting a deficit with nearly every trade competitor and in every class of goods. The U.S. now produces only \$2 worth of every \$3 of goods Americans consume. This manufacturing crisis began soon after foreign adoption of border adjusted VATs to replace tariffs and, more recently, to reduce corporate income taxes.

The precipitous decline of manufacturing employment's share of U.S. employment is a principal cause for declining middle and blue collar share of U.S. incomes. Just since 1998 manufacturing employment has declined 20%, the worst lay-off since the Great Depression. Despite doubling of manufacturing productivity since 1978, real factory compensation per employee has declined 11%. A similar trend to manufacturing appears to be developing in the business services sector due to foreign outsourcing, although not yet as severe.

The "Invisible Hand" Has Been Handcuffed

The U.S. has been running increasing trade deficits in goods for three decades. Obviously a U.S. current account deficit cannot continue indefinitely—but it can continue as long as foreign creditors are desirous of accumulating financial and physical assets of the world's largest and most liquid market, and no end to this appetite for U.S. assets is yet apparent. Devaluation has not efficiently reduced trade deficits; excess money creation by the Fed has resulted in as much inflation as devaluation. U.S. innovation and productivity improvements are rapidly sent abroad, helping foreign manufacture as much as domestic—witness EDP and telecommunications. And no prescription is more foolish than writing off the need for our manufacturing sector, the principle source of U.S. technological progress and military security. Foreign border adjusted taxation has successfully "gamed" trade with the U.S., and is the reason that the most innovative, production and hard working nation in the world is uncompetitive. Therein lies the remedy for leveling the trade "playing field."

The Fundamental Solution

The solution to this problem is for the U.S. to adopt a border adjusted federal tax code which replaces "direct" income taxes which cannot be border adjusted by the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules. This would result in 15% to 18% "indirect" taxes that would be WTO acceptable for border adjustment. For so long as the current WTO rules remain in place, there are three types of indirect taxes that can address the problem: a business transfer tax (BTT), a national retail sales tax or a value added tax, (or a combination), any of which are consumption based tax reform. Such reform should logically start with replacement of the corporate income tax and pro-

gressively replace personal income tax, all on a "tax revenue neutral" basis.

A 16.5% BTT, for example, could replace the personal and business income taxes, employer payroll taxes and the gift and estate taxes, virtually the whole income tax code other than the personal share of social insurance taxes. A major additional benefit of the BTT will be to bring the three quarter trillion dollar trade in goods deficit into the U.S. federal tax base. At 16.5% BTT, this would result in \$125 billion additional U.S. tax revenue.

Congressional consideration of fundamental tax reform next year and the debate that will be sparked by the President's Advisory Panel of Federal Tax Reform report due to be released soon represent the best opportunity to address this issue.



MTA joins with the National Tooling & Manufacturing Association on Tuesday, March 14, 2006 for a dinner presentation, "**Building a Winning Team.**" The speaker will be Mike Mittler, NTMA Chairman of the Board; co-founder and president of Mittler Bros. Machine & Tool located in Wright City, Missouri; and owner of MB Motorsports, a race team competing in the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series. Mr. Mittler will talk about the current status and direction of the NTMA, along with "Building a Winning Team"—why you should consider teams for your business and examples of winning teams.

Social hour starts at 5:30 p.m. followed by dinner and the presentation. It will be held at Club Venetian in Madison Heights. To RSVP, contact Anne Cairns at 586-677-5568 or e-mail Anne at detroitntma@aol.com.

Due to popular demand, MTA and Raymond & Prokop, PC are presenting the seminar: "**A Primer on Bankruptcy: What To Do When Your Customer Or Supplier Files For Bankruptcy and How To Help Yourself Using Tool Liens**" to be held on Thursday, February 23, 2006 at the historic Durant-Dort Office Building in Flint.

This workshop is free to all MTA members. If you would like to attend, fax your reservation to MTA at 248-488-0500. Please include your company name, number of attendants, company contact and phone number.

Member Services Directory sheets were mailed to all member companies on February 10, 2006. Remember to return your ASAP to avoid being left out of the 2006 MSD. If you did not receive your copy or have any questions, contact Ron at (248) 488-0300 ext. 1306 or e-mail to ron@mtaonline.com.

Legislative Update

by: *Judy Augenstein*
Legislative Consultant, Lansing



In her fourth State of the State address of her first term, Governor Jennifer Granholm detailed the next steps in her plan to diversify Michigan's economy, create new jobs and protect families. Granholm outlined four specific steps she will take this year to continue the Jobs Today, Jobs Tomorrow plan which was first announced in last year's State of the State address.

- 1 - Invest in our 21st century economy by going anywhere and doing anything to create jobs and fighting to protect the jobs we have.
- 2 - Investing in the health of citizens by dramatically increasing the number of people who have access to affordable insurance.
- 3 - Investing in education and the quality of our schools to ensure all of Michigan's children have an opportunity for a quality education, access to higher education and that Michigan has the best educated work force in the nation.
- 4 - Investing in the safety and security of families by calling for an increase in the minimum wage, giving every worker an opportunity to save for retirement, protecting our seniors and demanding new standards of corporate accountability and ethics laws for elected officials.

In closing the Governor asked all Michigan residents to believe in our collective future. "I invite you to join me in believing in that next chapter of Michigan's history," she said, "join me in writing it."

A group named Unicameral Michigan has been approved by the Secretary of State to begin collecting signatures to place a Constitutional amendment on the ballot to eliminate the Michigan Senate. The Hastings based group contends that eliminating the Senate would save taxpayers \$50 million dollars a year. The group needs to gather 417,000 signatures by mid July in order to put the proposal before the voters in November. If adopted, the measure would go into effect on January 1, 2007. Currently, each Michigan senator is elected every four years and represents from 212,000 to 263,000 people compared to 77,000 to 91,000 people represented by each member of the House, each of whom are elected to a two year term. The Michigan system is based on the idea that just

(Legislative Talk - continued on page 8)

because an idea is popular does not mean it is wise, practical, helpful or even honorable, therefore we have a “checks and balances” system—a two house system. That is why when the state embarked on a constitutional effort back in 1963, the Senate was seen as, not only necessary, but critical.

On a Lighter Note

From a member: **ZERO GRAVITY**

When NASA first started sending up astronauts, they quickly discovered that ballpoint pens would not work in zero gravity. To combat this problem, NASA scientists spent a decade and \$12 billion developing a pen that writes in zero gravity, upside down, on almost any surface including glass and at temperatures ranging from below freezing to over 300 degrees centigrade.

The Russians used a pencil.

Your taxes are due again—enjoy paying them!



MTA List of Endorsed Service Providers

- ❖ **Assurant Benefits** (formerly Fortis) (life insurance)
MTA contacts: Mark Tyler 248-489-8505
Stella Krupansky 248-488-0300 ext. 1310
- ❖ **Blue Cross Blue Shield/BCN** (health insurance)
MTA contacts: Mark Tyler 248-489-8505
Elaine Burger-Laskosky 248-488-0300 ext. 1309
- ❖ **Federated Ins.** (property & casualty insurance)
Provider contact: Joseph Busby 800-428-4143
- ❖ **Freedom One Financial Group** (401(k) programs)
Provider contact: Leslie Goodwin 248-620-8100
- ❖ **John M. Packer & Associates** (unemployment)
Provider contact: Nathan Wiest 800-482-2971
- ❖ **LDMI/Custom Telecom** (phone/communications)
Provider contact: Kathy Schaumburger 866-332-1200

MTA receives a benefit from its Endorsed Providers when you, as a member, patronize them. This is one way we are able to maintain the level of dues.

Inflation Talk

CPI-W Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers

Month	82-84	1967	57-59
Dec 2005	192.5	573.3	666.9*
Nov	193.4	576.1	670.0*
Oct	195.2	581.5	676.2*
Sept	195.0	580.9	675.5*
August	192.1	572.3	665.5*
July	191.0	568.8	661.7*
June	190.1	566.2	658.5*
May	190.0	566.0	658.2*

CPI-U All Urban Consumers

Month	82-84	1967	57-59
Dec 2005	196.8	589.4	685.6*
Nov	197.6	592.0	688.4*
Oct	199.2	596.7	694.0*
Sept	198.8	595.4	692.6*
August	196.4	588.2	684.2*
July	195.4	585.2	680.7*
June	194.5	582.6	677.6*
May	194.4	582.4	677.3*

Note: December 2005 CPI-W represents a 3.5% increase from one year ago; CPI-U a 3.4% 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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