

# tmta talk

A Publication of the Tooling, Manufacturing & Technologies Association

## From Rob's Roost

by: Rob Dumont,  
President & CEO



Summer is winding down; autumn and hunting season are in the wings; children are back to school and universities are again in session! Many families will for the first time experience the 'empty nest' syndrome and, hopefully, come to realize that it has its advantages.

Washington continues its seemingly relentless chain of relative nonsense with an Attorney General forced into resignation and a Senator who apparently missed the memo on 'Better Bathroom Behavior'. Hopefully our elected officials will leave the political drama mongering behind and get on with addressing the many ills faced by this nation.

Small victories are to be relished! Trade Promotion Authority died a quiet death at the end of June but, be assured, the struggle is not over. Efforts continue to negotiate a revival of the so called Fast Track authority that has visited virtual ruin on American manufacturing. Fortunately there are a number of members of Congress first elected in 2006 who are keenly aware that Trade Policy was a major factor in their being elected and they have more or less banded together to influence the various committee chairs that change is needed and it is needed sooner rather than later.

The efforts of the TMTA to remain connected to these reform minded members is ongoing with frequent visits to their offices on the Hill and a constant monitoring on the progress of the various legislative offerings being put forth.

The TMTA continues to get favorable coverage in the *Manufacturing & Technology News* a national newsletter that focuses on innovation, globalization and industrial competitiveness ([www.manufacturingnews.com](http://www.manufacturingnews.com)) an extremely good newsletter

ter and one you might consider subscribing to.

In addition the TMTA had a feature article entitled 'A New Voice for Manufacturing' in the July/August issue of *Forging* ([www.forgingmagazine.com](http://www.forgingmagazine.com)). This type of coverage for our association spreads the word of the efforts we make on behalf of American manufacturing and, indeed, Americans and is an inexpensive way to spread both the word of the TMTA and to expand its membership.

We are working on getting Resolutions on Trade Policy passed by State governments in Michigan, Missouri, Iowa and Nebraska. We have had very positive contact with Senators from each of these States on the issue and with a member of the House of Representatives in Missouri as well. More to come as the efforts progress. One might wonder what the benefit of such a resolution is and the short answer is that it puts additional pressure on members of Congress to pay attention to and act on Trade Policy. An additional benefit is that it provides a foundation for opening a Trade Policy discussion among legislators and electors within the State. When people (read employees) become familiar with the sorry state of American Trade Policy, be assured, their representatives in Washington will get the message or ignore it at their own peril!

### New National Manufacturing Association Finds A Niche With Free Trade Angst: An Interview With Tooling, Manufacturing & Technologies Association President Rob Dumont

From: *MANUFACTURING & TECHNOLOGY NEWS*, August 27, 2007

When the Michigan Tooling Association decided earlier this year to become a national trade association aimed at tackling issues associated with free and fair trade, it knew it wasn't going to be easy attracting members and gaining a foothold ('Interview' continues on Page 2)

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### TMTA Calendar of Events-September 2007

Remember, visit the TMTA website Calendar at [www.thetmta.com](http://www.thetmta.com) for detailed, up-to-date information on all events.

- 19 TMTA Board of Directors meets
- 20 MTMIC Board of Directors meets

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(‘Interview’ continued from Page 1)

in Washington. But the group, now known as the Tooling, Manufacturing & Technologies Association (TMTA), has had some success. In seven months, it has gone from representing members located only in Michigan with 22,000 employees, to having members in 21 states representing 49,000 employees.

A significant percentage of the new members have come from the National Association of Manufacturers’ Domestic Manufacturing Group (DMG). This ad-hoc group of manufacturers formed within NAM in the hopes that it could persuade the organization to support legislation aimed at fair trade and to force China to stop manipulating its currency. Many members of the DMG believe their efforts have failed.

“We tried to work from within NAM and felt that we didn’t get anywhere,” says Brian Sullivan, TMTA’s director of sales, marketing and communications. “Not only didn’t we feel we got anywhere, but that we were met with hostility, and so we’ve decided to not renew our membership with NAM.”

TMTA president Rob Dumont was active in the DMG and became acquainted with its members. But when NAM was incapable of backing the DMG’s agenda, Dumont felt there was an opportunity for a national group to pursue the interests of small- and medium-sized manufacturers.

Many of the members of the DMG “have seen the value of joining our association, feeling that we are distinctive in that we are aggressive advocates for them,” says Sullivan. “That’s what we’re doing. Rob Dumont continues to be very busy in Washington, D.C., and across the country at town hall meetings where presidential primaries are occurring.”

TMTA, which is based in NAM president [and former] Gov. John Engler’s home state of Michigan, feels it is on the cusp of affecting a change in U.S. trade policies, thanks in part to the recent publicity over a myriad of defective Chinese products. “It seems as though the grass roots populace is becoming all of a sudden quite aware of the issues of what is going on vis-a-vis multi-nationalism and globalism,” says Sullivan.

Manufacturing & Technology News editor Richard McCormack sat down with Dumont on one of his recent trips to Washington, D.C. Here’s what he had to say.

**Q: What are your goals as leader of a new national trade association?**

**Dumont:** I hope that the efforts currently underway to counteract this phenomenon of the big multinationals are successful. We can’t defeat them in terms of money. The root of most of the evil that we’re experiencing is the absolute deplorable trade policies that the United States has, or the lack of trade policies. It’s easy [for the multinationals] to take a head-long rush into the less industrialized countries where they can take advantage of low labor costs, but it’s not done to supply that area of the world. It’s done to sup-

ply America. They are taking advantage of that situation. With our trade agreements, America-the-benevolent was hoping to raise the living standards of the underdeveloped countries of the world. The assumption was that these other countries function like we do. They don’t. They don’t have the same considerations for child labor, slave labor, prison labor. They don’t have any standards. They don’t have the media watchdog that at times we’re fortunate to have and at times we’re cursed to have. It’s a deliberate yet subtle, willful blindness on the part of corporate executives who have recognized the opportunity to take advantage of a situation to create wealth without regard to the harm and ramifications that they create.

**Q: What do your members say about the conflict that exists between the small- and medium-sized manufacturers and the big multinationals?**

**Dumont:** These are very bright people, unfortunately so many of them are absolutely head-long in a desperate rush to stay in business. We send out a survey to our members each year asking them how much work they have compared to last year. Quite often you see that everybody is happy because they have a lot of work, but at the end the survey, they say that once their current job is finished, there is nothing in the pipeline. Ten years ago, this was an industry that always had work in the pipeline. Today, they get one job and then they scramble to find their next job.

**Q: How do you expect to change the culture of the global capitalistic system?**

**Dumont:** We can’t beat them with bucks but we can sure beat them at the ballot box. That is the only answer. The reality is the guy who runs the largest American corporation gets exactly the same number of votes as the guy who sweeps the floor in one of his plants. There are lots more of them than there are CEOs.

**Q: Yet the National Association of Manufacturers put together its own education program in the last election cycle so that its members could inform their workers of the importance of trade and their vote for the free-trade politicians. You might have one vote, but you have competing agendas in the manufacturing sector.**

**Dumont:** We have two different factions in manufacturing. The reality is that large corporations have a vested interest in continuing to profit from deplorable conditions in other countries and to take advantage of currency manipulation. They have a captive audience. It’s not surprising that people listen to their employers. But a lot of the employees at companies like Caterpillar probably have friends and relatives on the street because they work for some other company that doesn’t take advantage of the things that Caterpillar takes advantage of, and they’re not stupid. People sit down over a cold one on Saturday night or the barbecue on a Sunday afternoon and chat about the realities of what’s going on.

One of my members who no longer is in business said to me one day, “If you go into Wal-Mart and want to buy something made in the USA, you better have three or four hours to look around. On the other hand, if you want to find something made in China, walk in, close your eyes and point.”

**Q: What’s been the reaction from multinational manufacturers to your charges?**

**Dumont:** I haven’t heard anything. My sense is that if any inquiries have been made by multinationals they probably are made at NAM and I suspect that NAM still considers us to be insignificant. NAM has the potential to be an excellent organization but it’s been co-opted. I’m not opposed to NAM in total. NAM does some good work and they deal with some great issues, but on critical matters, they take positions that are indefensible.

**Q: They’d argue with you on that. They say they’ve pressed the administration on currency alignment more than any other group.**

**Dumont:** We were an active part of NAM’s Domestic Manufacturing Group—the DMG—and unless the DMG gets together again and revisits these issues and re-defines a strategy, it’s going to go away.

**Q: One of the things I hear repeatedly from economists is that the industries that are most negatively impacted by trade cry the loudest because they are losing jobs. These are the industries that you represent. They say that they are inefficient and uncompetitive and the United States should not be protecting them because it’s inevitable that they will be lost.**

**Dumont:** Aren’t these the same economists who say the reason all of these jobs are being lost is because our productivity is so high and has increased so much?

**Q: There is a lot of hubbub in the press when a plant closes, but they argue that, overall, the economy is better off, so don’t pay much attention to the cries of the few.**

**Dumont:** I have a problem with the idea that everyone is better off. There is something haywire here.

**Q: The United States remains a manufacturing powerhouse. It has the largest manufacturing economy in the world. Industrial production is up. So what’s your fuss?**

**Dumont:** How accurate are all of these figures?

**Q: They’re from the U.S. Federal Reserve.**

**Dumont:** That’s small comfort. Oftentimes people use statistics the same way a drunk uses a lamppost: for support rather than illumination. Numbers can be skewed to support anyone’s argument.

**Q: What’s been the reaction to your organization’s decision to change its name and go national?**

**Dumont:** It’s been largely favorable. Between 94 percent and 96 percent of our members were in favor of it because of the recognition that we have to address these issues on a national basis. It’s very easy to be critical of state politicians and state government, but the reality is there is very little state governments can do to address the issues manufacturers face. This is a federal problem. Unfortunately, the current administration has ignored it and for some strange reason hasn’t been able to understand it. If you look at HR-1498, the Hunter-Ryan bill on Chinese currency manipulation, it had 178 co-sponsors and they couldn’t even bring it to a vote.

**Q: What happens next for your trade association?**

**Dumont:** Our immediate agenda is to continue to fight with regard to currency manipulation and to forestall and prevent renewal of trade promotion authority. We have a position we’re working on relative to health care costs. We have to educate policymakers on the impact foreign VAT taxes are having on our manufacturing sector. We have to impress upon our legislators that it’s well and good to create legislation for a perceived social benefit but they have to be mindful of the cost of implementing that legislation. For example, HIPAA was the most ridiculous piece of legislation that they’ve come up with in the last two decades. It achieves virtually nothing at huge cost. It created a whole new industry that arose to satisfy the regulatory requirements of a new bureaucracy in D.C. It’s another example of government using a chain saw when a scalpel would have done the job.

**Q: What immediate goals do you have for TMTA?**

**Dumont:** We need to increase our numbers because numbers count tremendously. If I walk into a legislator’s office and I say we have this many member companies in your district and they employ this many people, I get a better reception if those numbers are impressive. And one thing I will not do is fudge the numbers. Washington is a big town. The halls of Congress are long and empty. I roam around there by my lonesome. It’s rare I collide with someone else pushing these issues. If individual companies are satisfied with what their association is doing, my advice is if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it. On the other hand, if you like what we’re doing and nobody else is doing it for you then please join us because we need the support.



*Remember to visit the TMTA website at [www.thetmta.com](http://www.thetmta.com) for all your up-to-date news and information!*

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# From the Desk of Gary Wood

MTMIC, Chief Operating Officer



## DIRECTOR ELECTION

Time flies when you are having fun!

We must be having a lot of fun because it is already time for another election of the Board of Directors! Do you want to run for the Board? If you do, please contact me prior to September 21 to get your name on the ballot ([Gary@mtaonline.com](mailto:Gary@mtaonline.com) or 248-488-1172, ext 1316).

The newly elected Directors for the 2008 through 2010 term will be announced at the Annual Meeting which will be held on October 18, 2007 at the Red Run Golf Club in Royal Oak. Please mark your calendar to attend the luncheon meeting.

## MEGAN BROWN

The Board of Directors would like all of you to extend a welcome to Megan Brown who has joined the staff of the MTMIC as the "Director of Sales and Marketing". Megan has fifteen years experience successfully marketing related products to industrial and other clients in the state of Michigan. Megan joined the staff on September 4, 2007 and can be reached at [Megan@mtaonline.com](mailto:Megan@mtaonline.com) or 248-488-1172, ext. 1006 or 248-444-9513. Megan will be exclusively marketing the MTMIC both directly and through independent agents.

Her first assignment is to develop marketing materials and the MTMIC website to reflect the organization and address the needs of the many policyholders. We are excited to have her marketing talents and sales skills as we progress with the growth of the organization.

## LOCK BOX

The MTMIC "Lock Box" is only for payment of WORKERS' COMPENSATION premium. This lock box procedure was established due to the recent changes in generally accepted auditing standards. In the past we were permitted to operate with minimal staffing which allowed for us to use the existing staff to process billings and payments. We are now required to have separation of duties and it was either hire another person to open checks and record payments or obtain the services of a bank lock box (at a much lower cost) thus saving the policyholders money on overhead.

It is imperative that you only make Workers' Compensation Premium payments to this lock box. We have prepared special envelopes (canary color) with the preprinted address of the lock box to assist in making this an easy process. We also offer ACH payment processing if you want to make sure

that your payment is recorded properly without having to mail it in monthly. If you have any questions on the ACH payment process, please contact Chris Doebler ([Chris@mtaonline.com](mailto:Chris@mtaonline.com) or 248-488-1172, ext. 1012)

We have received payments in the lock box for other premium and dues payments. If you make a payment to the box for OTHER THAN WORKERS' COMPENSATION there will be delay in processing those payments to the appropriate accounts.

## PAYROLL ESTIMATES

More on the topic of time flying; we are almost at the point where we will need input for the upcoming renewal payroll estimates. In October we will be requesting expanded information including details on whether you have airplanes, boats, additional locations, dba's or additional named insureds. The list will be short but involves necessary information to support the most favorable renewal quote.

## COMPUTER CONVERSION

The MTMIC computer conversion should be near completion by the time you get this newsletter. While we have been down for nearly a week, we had planned ahead to provide for the timely payment of all indemnity payments and we were current on all medical payments before we had the shut down.

If you had any questions on situations which occurred in the down time, please contact us with your concerns or comments.

## LOSS CONTROL

The staff has continued to provide the necessary loss control services and is working on a new, updated training program to assist you with the daily safety activities involved with operating a shop. The new training information is scheduled to be available in DVD format after the first of the year.

Many of you have asked for resources for Safety Posters. While these posters were at one time available directly through the MTA, they can now be obtained online. Ask your loss control representative for contact information.

## FINAL THOUGHT

Have you noticed all of the recalls and other warnings you have been seeing in the news lately?

This highly predictable situation is the result of dealing with societies where the people just don't care that much about the environment, their customers or each other. Their Government doesn't care about your safety either. Sometimes I wonder if our Government is that concerned about our safety when foreign countries are permitted to export lethal commodities to the

US. Who thought a Chinese business person would care if there was lead paint in the toy they sent to be sold to your kid?

Looking around in certain parts of this country, it is hard to tell if we are even in the United States anymore. I recently had a conversation with a "local" mortgage broker; he was calling me from his office in California. He mentioned the level of foreclosures was forcing up the mortgage rates charged to people that were just getting normal (NON-sub-prime) mortgages.

I ask him to look out at his parking lot and tell me how many US manufactured vehicles versus foreign cars he saw. The ratio was 1 to 3 according to him.

"There's your problem," I told him. His response was that lots of people don't work for domestic auto manufacturers and that US workers are now much more high tech. Later that evening I called a different mortgage company and I would swear it was in India. Some people just don't understand the long-range ramifications of outsourcing every commodity.

How long before every job which provides "value added" is outsourced and all we do is sell hamburgers to each other? Last night I heard in a poll, that only 73% of those polled believed the US would survive as a sovereign country in 100 years. Use your head, save your future.

Did I mention that my basement flooded the other day when a pipe fitting failed? Would anybody care to guess where that fitting came from???

#### TRAIN YOUR STAFF PROPERLY ON THE USE OF CRANES AND FORKLIFTS

## Welcome New Members!

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome the following new members to the Tooling, Manufacturing & Technologies Association:



❖ **Charlotte Pipe & Foundry** of Charlotte, NC, specializing in the production of cast iron, PVC, ABS, and CPVC pipe and fittings for plumbing and industrial systems;

❖ **Kason Industries, Inc.** of Newnan, GA, specializing in die casting, stamping, plating, toolmaking and design of commercial specialty hardware and accessories; and

❖ **Vulcan Threaded Products** of Pelham, AL, specializing in manufacturing and supplying threaded products.

## Legislative Update

by: *Judy Augenstein,*  
*Legislative Consultant, Lansing*



In a recent speech delivered by former Republican Governor William Milliken, he called term limits a "disaster." He denounced the ever-increasing cost of running for office, suggested it was "almost obscene and a real threat to democratic institutions." "This is a watershed in Michigan history...the political climate has deteriorated with a gravity of meanness, bitterness and excessive partisanship. Winning elections has become an end in itself." He added that the goal is to fix blame and not fix problems and its now "policy vs. spin points" and on that, the audience erupted into applause. Governor Milliken was the longest serving governor in state history with an ability to work with both sides of the political aisle. Both the Democratic led House and Senate respected him and the Office of the Governor.

The Legislature continues to struggle with the state's budget crisis. Most Democrats want to raise taxes while most Republicans want to cut state programs. Many House originated budget bills have passed the House and await consideration by the Senate. Talks with legislative leaders and special interests regarding a proposed 6% sales tax on "luxury services" as a way to balance the 2008 state budget continue.

The National Federation of Independent Businesses and the Associated Builders and Contractors of Michigan have announced that they could only accept an increase in Michigan's gas tax if state government changes the law to make Michigan a right to work state and ends the prevailing wage act. The Michigan Chamber of Commerce has joined a coalition of municipal officials and road organizations calling for an increase in transportation taxes. The coalition commented that the catastrophic collapse of an interstate bridge in Minneapolis serves as a warning for the state to not ignore increased funding for bridge and road improvements. The Office of the Governor and the Legislature contend that it is unlikely that an increase in transportation taxes will take place at this time, especially with the 2007-08 budget unresolved.

SB 680 has been sponsored by Senator Randy Richardville, R-Monroe. The bill was requested by TMTA and awaits legislative action. The measure amends the Renaissance Recovery Zone Act by allowing companies with 75 employees or more to participate in the Act as long as they negotiate a portion of their special services tax with local government. Please contact your senator to urge him/her to support SB 680. Access contact information for your senator at [www.senate.michigan.gov](http://www.senate.michigan.gov).

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# Free-trade deals face rocky path

by: *Ian Swanson*

*September 04, 2007*

The globalization debate will play a prominent role in the congressional agenda this fall, with business lobbyists on K Street gearing up for a series of critical votes on trade.

The Peru free trade agreement (FTA) would be the first trade deal considered by the Democratic-majority Congress, and business is pressing for a House vote before the end of the month. Lobbyists for multinationals also hope to ward off legislation that could lead to higher tariffs on Chinese imports.

The challenge for business is that House Democrats in general, and influential Democratic committee chairmen in particular, are often skeptical toward free trade deals.

For example, Appropriations Chairman David Obey (D-Wis.) voted against the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), permanent normal trade relations with China, and U.S. entry to the World Trade Organization (WTO). All were supported by the Clinton administration.

Obey also voted against the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and smaller deals with Chile, Singapore, Australia, Oman and Bahrain that were sent to Congress by the Bush administration.

He's far from alone. Foreign Affairs Chairman Tom Lantos (D-Calif.), Homeland Security Chairman Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.), Judiciary Chairman John Conyers Jr. (D-Mich.), Natural Resources Chairman Nick Rahall (D-W.Va.), Transportation Chairman Jim Oberstar (D-Minn.) and Veterans Affairs Chairman Bob Filner (D-Calif.) have identical voting records to Obey's on these key trade votes.

Financial Services Chairman Barney Frank (D-Mass.) and Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson (D-Minn.) voted for the relatively non-controversial Bahrain FTA, but against the rest of the other deals. Rules Chairwoman Louise Slaughter (D-N.Y.) voted yes only on WTO membership.

The views of these chairmen carry weight with younger members of the Democratic Caucus and create a test for House Democratic leaders, who have been friendlier to trade deals.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), for example, voted for NAFTA and the WTO. She also voted yes on trade deals with Australia, Chile and Singapore. Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) voted in favor of NAFTA, the WTO, China, Chile, Singapore, Australia and Bahrain.

Lori Wallach of Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch said

she can't fathom why Democrats would consider moving deals with Peru and Panama, essentially expanding NAFTA and CAFTA to additional countries. Only a minority of House Democrats is likely to vote yes on the deals, and the freshman class that provided Pelosi her majority ran on agendas critical of Bush's trade deals.

She also warned that if some Democrats vote for the deals, their defections will split the party and remove an effective campaign issue for Democrats challenging incumbent Republicans.

"I have spoken to many senior House Democrats who are quite concerned that the passage of two Bush NAFTA expansion agreements by a Democratic-majority Congress by a majority of the minority will blur the Democratic-GOP line on trade/job offshoring issues that proved a successful wedge issue in 2006," Wallach said in an e-mail.

U.S. Chamber of Commerce President Tom Donohoe acknowledged Democratic leaders risk little politically by voting against trade, but said that they could end up winning an election while losing the economic war.

"If there would not be a serious political kickback in the short run, there will be in the long run when people ask for problems to be solved and ask for markets to be competitive and Americans to be engaged in those markets," Donohoe said.

To build support for the deals, the chamber is launching a grassroots effort targeting 75 congressional districts, including those of 40 Democrats, with letters and phone calls. The effort is focused on freshman members, said Chamber trade lobbyist Christopher Wenk.

Over the August recess, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) and the Chamber also sought to build pressure by lobbying editorial pages for support, recruiting Democratic mayors like Richard Daley of Chicago to weigh in.

Business lobbyists hope a Peru vote will clear the way for votes on deals with Colombia, Panama and South Korea, but here the picture gets cloudy.

A deal with Panama could probably be approved by the Democratic Congress, but the Bush administration wants Congress to first approve a controversial deal with Colombia first signed by President Bush. Under GOP rule, deals were considered in the order in which they were signed, and the administration hopes to continue this policy, according to Gretchen Hamel, a spokeswoman for the USTR.

Lobbyists for organized labor, however, are not thrilled with the votes on Peru and Panama and have drawn a serious line on Colombia.

"I think it would be a big mistake for the administration to push Colombia too much," said Bill Samuel, legislative director of the AFL-CIO, which vehemently opposes the deal with Colombia because of violence against trade unionists in that country.

While the AFL-CIO isn't expected to lobby hard against the Peru FTA, Samuel said he wants Democratic representatives to stress that the Peru FTA cannot be a model for future trade deals. This is intended to put the breaks on deals with Colombia and South Korea.

Business groups, in contrast, want to secure a path forward for the Colombia FTA, which carries the most economic importance of the three Latin American pacts. At the same time, they aren't as picky about the order of the deals. Donohue said he believes any trade agreement that can be approved should be to build momentum for other deals.

The administration could force the issue on Colombia, which was negotiated under fast-track rules. These rules subject legislation implementing the deals to strict deadlines, giving the agreement a path to the floor if it is introduced. For example, in the Senate the deal would not be subject to a filibuster.

Some have speculated that the administration may pick a fight with congressional Democrats by seeking to move the legislation even if they are unsure of a successful vote. This could allow the administration to portray Democrats as boosting Venezuelan strongman Hugo Chavez by opposing a trade agreement with a U.S. ally in Latin America.

Hamel, however, appeared to downplay the possibility, saying it would not be the "ideal" situation.

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## The Marketplace



### Personnel Available:

**Associate** with experience in the fields of marketing, sales and promotions; supplier liaison; customer service; project management and strategic planning; consulting and training; business development; events and tradeshow management; and strategic planning seeks a challenging position working in a team environment.

Ask for **Resume #07-09**.

## Health News

TMTA Insurance Agency



The BCBSM generic drug website has been renovated with main pages for members, consumers and providers.

Home page users can compare drug pricing using the Top 100 Drug Pricing Calculator, read alerts and information about newly available generics and view current legislation related to generic drugs. Consumer page users can check to see if their drug is available in generic form and access information on generics direct from the FDA.

The website is available at [www.theunadvertisedbrand.com](http://www.theunadvertisedbrand.com).

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Beginning this fall, the Blues will begin exchanging data with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the federal agency that administers the Medicare program. The move is expected to provide the Blues with accurate Medicare records for every member.

Under the CMS's Voluntary Data Sharing Agreement, BCBSM will now transmit Medicare membership files each quarter. In turn, CMS will transmit a response file including coverage indicators for Medicare Parts A, B and D; effective dates for each coverage; and Beneficiary's Health Insurance Claim Numbers.

This mutual data exchange will improve accuracy and ensure that claims will be paid by the appropriate organization. It is also expected to reduce administrative costs for BCBSM.

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Medicare will stop paying the costs of treating eight identified conditions that happen in hospitals that could have been prevented.

This rule is intended to improve the accuracy of Medicare's payment for hospital patients who receive acute care and to encourage hospitals to improve the quality of their services.

In the future, hospitals will be expected to pick up the cost of additional treatment required by a preventable condition acquired in the hospital. The hospitals cannot bill the beneficiary for any charges associated with the hospital-acquired conditions according to Medicare's final rules.

The rules identify the eight conditions as: objects left in a patient during surgery; blood incompatibility; air embolism; falls; mediastinitis, which is an infection after heart surgery; urinary tract infections from using catheters; pressure ulcers, or bed sores; and vascular infections from using catheters.

## Freedom One Offers Free 401(k) Fiduciary Reviews

**How do you know if your 401(k) is on a successful course?** The DOL expects the 'prudent' plan sponsor to hire someone with the professional knowledge to carry out investment and other functions, including documenting their findings.

Freedom One has introduced the **401(k) Fiduciary Review, an expert third party analysis of your 401(k)**. This analysis will benchmark your company's current plan against appropriate peer groups and government guidelines. *If you are unsure of how well your current 401(k) plan is performing and what specific needs you have, the 401(k) Fiduciary Review will help you uncover the details.*

To get your plan on course for success, go to [www.freedomonefinancial.com/401kcheckup1.htm](http://www.freedomonefinancial.com/401kcheckup1.htm). You may also contact Lesley Goodwin at Freedom One at 248-620-8077.

Freedom One Retirement Services, one of the nation's largest full-service 401(k) plan provider, has successfully completed over 150 fiduciary reviews and has been servicing retirement plans since 1988. From saving one plan sponsor over \$700,000 in unknown fees to uncovering deficiencies, they've helped plan sponsors navigate their plan to success.

Freedom One Retirement Services has been the endorsed provider to TMTA since 2002.



## List of Endorsed Service Providers

- ❖ **Reliance Standard/Ameritas** (life/dental insurance)  
TMTA contacts: Dennis Campbell 248-355-1414  
Stella Krupansky 248-488-0300 ext. 1310
- ❖ **Blue Cross Blue Shield/BCN** (health insurance)  
TMTA contacts: Dennis Campbell 248-355-1414  
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: Lesley Goodwin 248-620-8100
- ❖ **John M. Packer & Associates** (unemployment)  
Provider contact: Nathan Wiest 800-482-2971
- ❖ **Custom Telecom** (phone/communications)  
Provider contact: Kathy Schaumburger 866-332-1200

**TMTA 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
<b>July 2007</b>	<b>203.700</b>	<b>606.759</b>	<b>705.66*</b>
June	203.906	607.374	706.37*
May	203.661	606.643	705.52*
April	202.130	602.083	700.22*
March	200.612	597.561	694.96*
Feb	198.544	591.403	687.80*
Jan	197.559	588.467	684.38*
Dec 2006	197.2	587.3	683.1*

### CPI-U All Urban Consumers

Month	82-84	1967	57-59
<b>July 2007</b>	<b>208.299</b>	<b>623.970</b>	<b>725.67*</b>
June	208.352	624.129	725.85*
May	207.949	622.921	724.45*
April	206.686	619.140	720.05*
March	205.352	615.145	715.40*
Feb	203.499	609.594	708.95*
Jan	202.416	606.348	705.17*
Dec 2006	201.8	604.5	703.0*

**Note: July 2007 CPI-W represents a 2.3% increase from one year ago; CPI-U a 2.4% 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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**P.O. Box 9151 Phone (248) 488-0300  
Farmington Hills, MI 48333 Fax (248) 488-0500**

*President and CEO — Robert J. Dumont  
Copy Editor, Layout / Design — Elaine F. Burger-Laskosky*

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