

# tmta talk

A publication of the  
Tooling, Manufacturing &  
Technologies Association

**FROM ROB'S  
ROOST**  
By ROB DUMONT  
PRESIDENT & CEO

## Ever Heard of Income Re-Distribution????

On June 28<sup>th</sup> of this year the Supreme Court of the United States released its decision resolving constitutional challenges to two provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (PPACA): the individual mandate, which requires individuals to purchase a health insurance policy providing a minimum level of coverage; and the Medicaid expansion, which gives funds to the States on the condition that they provide specified health care to all citizens whose income falls below a certain threshold.

At the outset of the decision, Chief Justice Roberts wrote:

***“We do not consider whether the Act embodies sound policies. That judgment is entrusted to the Nation’s elected leaders. We ask only whether Congress has the power under the Constitution to enact the challenged provisions.”***

In the end, that question was answered in the affirmative. Like it or not, the PPACA has been judged to be constitutional. Whether or not the Act amounts to sound policy is an open issue! The debate is ongoing.



“fees” in addition to the premiums associated with insurance. Fees apply to health insurance issuers and self-funded plan sponsors.

So we are now, if not blessed with, certainly visited by Health Reform and with it comes

These fees fund patient-centered outcomes research. The Patient-  
**(Rob’s Roost continues on Page 7)**

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## tmta Calendar of Events December 2012

<b>24- 25</b>	Christmas Holiday - TMTA Offices Closed Merry Christmas to All!
<b>31- 01</b>	New Year’s Holiday - TMTA Offices Closed Happy New Year!

Visit [www.thetmta.com](http://www.thetmta.com) for detailed,  
up-to-date information on all events.



Visit the New BCBSM/BCN Website!

Effective December 7, 2012, BCBSM & BCN introduced a new, improved, easy-to-use website. In their commitment to providing members and subscribers with the best online experience possible, BCBSM has merged [www.MiBCN.com](http://www.MiBCN.com) and [www.bcbsm.com](http://www.bcbsm.com) into one website at [www.bcbsm.com](http://www.bcbsm.com).

By integrating BCN into the BCBSM website, it allows you to explore all that the Blues have to offer in one location. They have improved the site's functionality and enhanced the content to help you and your employees make smarter healthcare decisions. More changes are scheduled down the line in 2013.

### Taming Tendinitis in the Knee

by: Harvard Medical School

Tendons are the bands of fibrous tissue that attach muscle to bone. Tendinitis—tendon inflammation—is often a repetitive strain injury. You get it by repeating the same motion over and over, which irritates the tendon. Joints commonly affected by tendinitis include the elbow, heel, and wrist.

Weekend warriors (folks who engage in high-intensity activities such as running or basketball on the weekend but do little to maintain conditioning during the week) often develop tendinitis in the knees. Simply being overweight can also contribute to knee tendinitis. Age is another risk factor. Over time, tendons become less flexible and the involved muscles lose strength, both of which further stress the tendons. Inflexible hamstring and quadricep muscles make you more susceptible as well.



Symptoms of tendinitis of the knee include:

- pain above or below the kneecap;
- swelling;
- pain that recurs with particular activities and eases with rest; and/or
- in severe cases, pain becomes constant (in spite of resting the joint) and can even disrupt sleep.

Here are some simple steps you can take to quell tendinitis pain. At the first sign of trouble:

- limit activities that put stress on your knees;
- apply ice;
- use over-the-counter pain relievers, ideally aspirin or another nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory like ibuprofen or naproxen; and/or
- use a knee support.

Once the pain and any swelling are gone, try easing back into your normal activities and hold off on more demanding athletic activities for a few weeks. Typically, tendinitis goes away in a few weeks or months. Your doctor may recommend extra treatments for particularly stubborn cases.

To keep tendinitis from coming back, ask your doctor about exercises to improve flexibility and address any muscle imbalances that may be placing stress on your knees.

For more information on recognizing and treating knee tendinitis as well as ligament issues, tissue tears, osteoarthritis and other knee conditions, visit the Harvard Medical School website at [www.health.harvard.edu/](http://www.health.harvard.edu/).

### Mini-Relaxation Exercises: A Quick Fix in Stressful Moments

by: Harvard Medical School

Mini-relaxations are stress busters you can reach for at any time. These techniques can ease your fear at the dentist's office, thwart stress before an important meeting, calm you when stuck in traffic, or help you keep your cool when faced with people or situations that irritate you. Whether you have one minute, two minutes, or three, these exercises work.

#### When you've got one minute:

Place your hand just beneath your navel so you can feel the gentle rise and fall of your belly as you breathe. Breathe in. Pause for a count of three. Breathe out. Pause

for a count of three. Continue to breathe deeply for one minute, pausing for a count of three after each inhalation and exhalation.

Or alternatively, while sitting comfortably, take a few slow deep breaths and quietly repeat to yourself “I am” as you breathe in and “at peace” as you breathe out. Repeat slowly two or three times. Then feel your entire body relax into the support of your chair.

#### When you've got two minutes:

Count down slowly from 10 to 0. With each number, take one complete breath, inhaling and exhaling. For example, breathe in deeply, saying “10” to yourself. Breathe out slowly. On your next breath, say “nine”, and so on. If you feel lightheaded, count down more slowly to space your breaths further apart. When you reach zero, you should feel more relaxed. If not, go through the exercise again.

#### When you've got three minutes:

While sitting, take a break from whatever you're doing and check your body for tension. Relax your facial muscles and allow your jaw to open slightly. Let your shoulders drop. Let your arms fall to your sides. Allow your hands to loosen so there are spaces between your fingers. Uncross your legs or ankles. Feel your thighs sink into your chair, letting your legs fall comfortably apart. Feel your shins and calves become heavier and your feet grow roots into the floor. Now breathe in slowly and breathe out slowly.

For more relaxation techniques and other solutions to control stress, visit the Harvard Medical School website at [www.health.harvard.edu/](http://www.health.harvard.edu/).

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## Life Insurance Program News

### Need Life Insurance For Yourself and/or Your Employees?

The purpose of life insurance is protection against financial loss in the event of death. No one knows what the future holds and the point of life insurance is to insure against what you can't predict. Life insurance will replace your income so your family and loved ones won't be left without resources should you die.

Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- How many people depend on your salary?
- Would your dependents suffer financially if something should happen to you?

Do you own a business or have a business partner?

How long would it take for your dependents to become self-sufficient?

Is employee life insurance worth the investment to retain your valued employees?

The next question to ask yourself is how much life insurance do you and/or your employees need. Your insurance agent can help you to answer this question.

TMTA has offered a Group Life Insurance Plan since 1950. As a member, you can leverage TMTA's national buying power and shared risk while tailoring a life insurance plan to meet your company's individual employee and owner needs.

Group plans are available with options for: basic life insurance, accidental death insurance, short-term disability insurance, long-term disability insurance and dependent life insurance.

Your rates will be lower than you could qualify for on your own with a two-year rate guarantee. There are both employer-paid and voluntary (employee-paid) coverage options with no minimum participation rules for voluntary plans. Your company will receive a custom tailored life insurance plan with no medical questions asked, no matter how many employees you have.

To receive more information on the TMTA Group Life Insurance Program or to receive a free, no-obligation quote, contact Stella at 248-488-0300, ext. 1310 or TMTA's endorsed agent, Bill Percha, at 586-904-9700.

### W-2 Preparation for TMTA Groups Through Reliance Standard Life Insurance

- Reliance Standard Life Insurance issues W-2's for long-term and short-term disability policyholders.
- Reliance provides the employer's match and issues the W-2's on taxable business. Reliance handles all tax filing responsibilities for the employer.
- W-2's are mailed directly to the employee. A copy is NOT sent to the employer.
- The December Monthly Case Summary Report (DICS) is your company's year-end statement. The monthly DICS reports are cumulative.
- The December DICS report is mailed the second week in January and cannot be provided sooner due to year-end corporate cut off dates.

***(Life Insurance continues on Page 5)***

# 2013 First/Second Qtr. Business Trends Outlook Survey

Thanks to the member companies that took the time to respond to the latest Business Trends Outlook Survey. The figures in the brackets are the responses from the survey completed six months ago.

## 1. Describe your company's operation:

Dies, Molds	10%	(07%)
Jigs, Fixtures, Gages	04%	(04%)
Engineering, Technology	00%	(00%)
Stamping, Forging, Casting	04%	(04%)
Manufacturing	22%	(31%)
Machining	23%	(26%)
Tools	07%	(04%)
Special Machines	04%	(07%)
Assemblies	04%	(00%)
Fabrications	06%	(04%)
Prototypes	01%	(00%)
Other	15%	(13%)

## 2. How is your business now?

Excellent	07%	(09%)
Very good	22%	(35%)
Good	47%	(43%)
Fair	17%	(13%)
Bad	07%	(00%)
Very bad	00%	(00%)

## 3. Over the next 6 mos. your co.'s business will:

Increase substantially	04%	(02%)
Increase moderately	37%	(50%)
Remain the same	52%	(41%)
Decrease moderately	06%	(07%)
Decrease substantially	01%	(00%)

## 4. Current average work week:

Hours per week	45.7	(49.4)
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## 5. Current employment:

Hourly:	31.9	(27.3)
Salaried:	8.0	( 6.5)

## 6. Compared to 1yr ago, current level of business is:

	<u>Up</u>	<u>Same</u>	<u>Down</u>
Quoting activity	39% (49%)	44% (50%)	17% (01%)
Shipments	41% (71%)	33% (27%)	26% (02%)
Order backlog	31% (50%)	39% (47%)	30% (03%)
Profits	35% (35%)	43% (64%)	22% (01%)
Employment	28% (47%)	58% (52%)	14% (01%)

## Comments:

***"...uncertainty after election..."***

Election results have hurt us! (manufacturing)

Much uncertainty after election. Good help still hard to find. (heat treat)

We're holding our breath! (foundry)

Elections have consequences. (machining)

Saw a push out of requirements in Oct-Nov. 2013 forecasts remain strong. (assemblies)

With customer demands and "Pay for business" added to zero profit margins, increased shipments is no longer exciting. (manufacturing)

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## The IRS Offers This 'Season of Giving' Tip

### Contribute to Qualified Charities:

If you plan to take an itemized charitable deduction on your 2012 tax return, your donation must go to a qualified charity by Dec. 31. Ask the charity about its tax-exempt status. You can also visit [www.IRS.gov](http://www.IRS.gov) and use the Exempt Organizations Select Check tool to check if your favorite charity is a qualified charity.

Donations charged to a credit card by Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> are deductible for 2012, even if you pay the bill in 2013. A gift by check also counts for 2012 as long as you mail it in December.

You generally can deduct your cash contributions and the fair market value of most property you donate to a qualified charity. Special rules apply to several types of donated property, including clothing or household items, cars and boats.

Remember, gifts given to individuals, whether to friends, family, the mailman or strangers, are NOT deductible.

**(Life Insurance continued from Page 3)**

W-2 Add-On for Group-Term Life Insurance

The IRS regulations state that the cost of any employer provided group-term life insurance in excess of \$50,000 is taxable income to the employee covered.

You must include in your employee's wages subject to social security and Medicare taxes the cost of group-term life insurance that is more than the cost of \$50,000 of coverage, reduced by the amount the employee paid toward the insurance (does not include pre-tax money).

The IRS has published the chart below to figure the amount to add to each employee's Form W-2:

Age at the end of taxable year	Cost per \$1,000 of insurance per month
Under 25	\$0.05
25-29	\$0.06
30-34	\$0.08
35-39	\$0.09
40-44	\$0.10
45-49	\$0.15
50-54	\$0.23
55-59	\$0.43
60-64	\$0.66
65-69	\$1.27
70 & Above	\$2.06

To illustrate: take for example, an employee who has \$75,000 of group-term life insurance from January to June and \$125,000 from July to December. The employee is age 60 at December 31, 2012 and contributed \$100 after-tax dollars towards his life insurance premiums.

$\$75,000 - \$50,000 / 1,000 * .66 * 6 \text{ months}$	\$ 99.00
$\$125,000 - \$50,000 / 1,000 * .66 * 6 \text{ months}$	\$297.00
Amount to add to W-2 wages	\$396.00
Minus amount paid by insured	\$100.00
Total amount added to W-2 boxes 1, 3 & 5 and entered into box 12 with code "C"	\$296.00



2013 IRS Standard Mileage Rates

The IRS issued the 2013 optional standard mileage

rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, and medical/moving purposes.

Beginning 1/1/13, the rates are as follows:

Business rates	-	56.5 cents
Medical or moving	-	24 cents
Charitable rates	-	14 cents

Taxpayers always have the option of calculating the actual costs of using their vehicle rather than using the standard mileage rates.

Taxpayers may not use the business standard mileage rate for a vehicle after using any depreciation method under the Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System or after claiming a Section 179 deduction for that vehicle. Also, the business standard mileage rate cannot be used for more than four vehicles used simultaneously.

Hire Veterans by Year End to Receive A Tax Credit

According to the IRS, employers planning to claim an expanded tax credit for hiring certain veterans should act soon. Many businesses may qualify to receive thousands of dollars through the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), but only if the veteran begins work before January 1, 2013.

Here are 6 key facts from the IRS about the WOTC as expanded by the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011:

- **Hiring Deadline:** Employers may be able to claim the expanded WOTC for qualified veterans who begin work on or after November 22, 2011, but before January 1, 2013.
- **Maximum Credit:** The maximum tax credit is \$9,600 per worker for employers that operate for-profit businesses, or \$6,240 per worker for tax-exempt organizations.
- **Credit Factors:** The amount of credit will depend on a number of factors such as: length of the veteran's unemployment before being hired, the number of hours the veteran works, and the amount of the wages the veteran receives during the first year of employment.
- **Disabled Veterans:** Employers hiring veterans with

**(FYI continues on Page 6)**

**(FYI continued from Page 5)**

service-related disabilities may be eligible for the maximum tax credit.

- **State Certification:** Employers must file Form 8850, Pre-Screening Notice and Certification Request for the Work Opportunity Credit, with their State Workforce Agency (SWA). The form must be filed within 28 days after the qualified veteran starts work. For additional information about your SWA, visit the U.S. Department of Labor's WOTC website at [www.doleta.gov/business/Incentives/opptax/](http://www.doleta.gov/business/Incentives/opptax/).
- **E-file:** Some states accept Form 8850 electronically.

Visit the IRS website at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) and enter 'WOTC' in the search field for forms and information about the expanded tax credit for hiring veterans.

## OSHA Whistleblower Pilot Program

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is launching an alternative dispute resolution pilot program for complaints filed with OSHA's Whistleblower Protection Program. The alternative dispute resolution (ADR) pilot program is designed to help complainants and employers resolve their disputes in a cooperative and voluntary manner.

The program will be implemented in 2 OSHA regions and offer 2 voluntary methods of ADR: early resolution and mediation. When a whistleblower complaint is filed with OSHA in one of the pilot regions, the parties will be notified of their ADR options and may work through an OSHA regional ADR coordinator to use these methods.

The 2 OSHA regions that will participate in the pilot program are Chicago and San Francisco. The Chicago Regional Office is responsible for whistleblower investigations in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Ohio while the San Francisco Regional Office covers Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, and various Pacific Islands including the commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam and American Samoa.

OSHA receives approximately 2,500 whistleblower complaints annually and administers the whistleblower provisions of 22 statutes. More information on the OSHA pilot program can be found at <http://s.dol.gov/WV>. More information on the OSHA Whistleblower Protection Program can be found at [www.whistleblowers.gov](http://www.whistleblowers.gov).

**For more information about the TMTA, our advocacy, events and benefits, visit us at [www.thetmta.com](http://www.thetmta.com)**

## INFLATION TALK

### CPI-W Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers

Month	82-84	1967	57-59
Oct	<b>227.974</b>	<b>679.066</b>	<b>789.75*</b>
Sept	228.184	679.690	790.47*
Aug	227.056	676.329	786.57*
July	225.568	671.899	781.41*
June	226.036	673.291	783.03*
May	226.600	674.973	784.99*
Apr	227.012	676.199	786.41*
Mar 2012	226.304	674.090	783.96*

### CPI-U All Urban Consumers

Month	82-84	1967	57-59
Oct	<b>231.317</b>	<b>692.923</b>	<b>805.86*</b>
Sept	231.407	693.192	806.17*
Aug	230.379	690.113	802.59*
July	229.104	686.294	798.15*
June	229.478	687.415	799.45*
May	229.815	688.423	800.62*
Apr	230.085	689.232	801.57*
Mar 2012	229.392	687.157	799.15*

**Note: October 2012 CPI-W represents a 2.2% increase from one year ago; CPI-U a 2.2% 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

**(Rob's Roost continued from Page 1)**

Centered Outcome Research Institute (PCORI) fees fund research that evaluates and compares health outcomes, clinical effectiveness, risks and benefits of medical treatments and services. Why do you suppose that information is being collected?

Fees will also fund the Transitional Reinsurance Program which will distribute the funds to insurers in the non-grandfathered individual market that disproportionately attracts individuals at risk for high medical costs. The intent is said to be to spread the financial risk across all health insurers to provide greater financial stability. This program is set to exist for the first three years of the Exchanges' operation (2014-2016).

The PPACA specifies the total amounts of the Reinsurance Fee that must be collected for the Reinsurance Program are \$12 billion in 2014, \$8 billion in 2015 and \$5 billion in 2016, totaling a cumulative sum of \$25 billion.

In addition, the fees are to be premium tax subsidies for individuals in Exchanges.

For the fully insured customer, the cumulative impact of health reform fees in 2014, based on government rule and industry analysis, anticipates an increase in the premium by about 3.8%. For self-funded plan sponsors, it is expected to amount to about \$6 per member per month.

The Insurer Fee, also lovingly known as the health insurance industry tax or premium tax, is an annual, permanent fee on health insurance providers beginning in 2014. The fee will fund premium tax subsidies for individuals and families with household incomes between 100% and 400% of the federal poverty level who purchase health insurance through the Health Benefit Exchange. Exchanges, expected to launch in 2014, allow individuals and small businesses to compare and purchase health plan offerings in their state.

These "fees" are sure to flow right down to the consumer which begs the question: What does "AFFORDABLE" mean in the title "...Affordable Care Act"?

*What is Christmas?*

*It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessings rich and eternal, and that every path may lead to peace.*

*-Agnes M. Pharo*

**TMTA ENDORSED  
SERVICE PROVIDERS**

**Blue Cross Blue Shield/BCN**

(Health insurance program)

TMTA contacts:

Bill Percha 586-904-9700 (cell)

Elaine Burger-Laskosky 248-488-0300, ext. 1309

**Freedom One Financial Group**

(401(k) Retirement program)

Provider contact:

John Young 248-620-8100

**GlobalTranz — CarrierRate.com**

(Freight discount program)

Provider contact:

Chad Hill 866-275-1407, ext. 130

**John M. Packer & Associates**

(Unemployment cost control program)

Provider contact:

Nathan Wiest 800-482-2971

**Practical Power LLC**

(Electrical savings program)

Provider contact:

Mark Bunting 248-726-7598

**Ralph C. Wilson Agency, Inc.**

(Insurance management)

Provider contact for Benefits coverages:

Robert Farris 248-355-1414, ext. 109

Provider contact for P&C and WC coverages:

Jay Poplawski, 248-355-1414, ext. 158

**Reliance Standard/Ameritas**

(Life/Dental insurance programs)

TMTA contacts:

Bill Percha 586-904-9700

Stella Krupansky 248-488-0300, ext. 1310

**SVS Vision**

(Safety & Vision programs)

Provider contact:

Monica Dyja 800-611-3683 or [www.svsvision.com](http://www.svsvision.com)

**Schena Roofing & Sheet Metal Co., Inc.**

(Commercial/industrial roofing contractor)

Provider contact:

586-949-4777

**Staffworks Group**

(Staffing needs)

Provider contact:

Bill Brann 877-304-9690

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

# Happy Holidays!

Our Very Best Wishes for a Safe and  
Joyous Holiday Season  
to Each of You and Your Families  
and a Successful New Year !

From Your Staff at TMTA:

Rob Dumont,  
Charlie Barnes,  
Elaine Burger-Laskosky,  
Stella Krupansky,  
and  
Ron Mariutto.



## Christmas/New Year Holiday Survey Results

Our sincere thanks to the companies that responded to this year's holiday survey.

		Open	½ Open ½ Closed	Closed Paid	Closed Unpaid
12/22	Sat	13%	0%	0%	87%
12/23	Sun	3%	0%	0%	97%
12/24	Mon	1%	8%	74%	17%
12/25	Tues	0%	0%	99%	1%
12/26	Wed	61%	0%	20%	19%
12/27	Thurs	69%	0%	15%	16%
12/28	Fri	68%	0%	11%	21%
12/29	Sat	17%	0%	3%	80%
12/30	Sun	3%	0%	3%	94%
12/31	Mon	5%	7%	53%	35%
1/1	Tues	1%	0%	96%	3%
1/2	Wed	95%	0%	1%	4%

### tmta talk

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