

tmta talk

A publication of the
Tooling, Manufacturing &
Technologies Association

**FROM Rob's
Roost**
By Rob Dumont
PRESIDENT & CEO

It Is a Drama, Is It Not?

Is President Trump poised to hit China with trade penalties in the near future as a toughening of his "America First" stance?

A White House official is quoted as having said "We want China to stop stealing our stuff, live up to its commitment, and don't distort the international trading system".

There can be little doubt the rhetoric is increasing but, we are just short of a year into this administration and the President's chief trade negotiator, Robert Lighthizer, during a recent Washington briefing said that the US complaints about Chinese trade practices could not be resolved by additional talks with Beijing.

Just what or, how extensive the administration's actions will be, remain undefined. The President's campaign promises to retaliate against China's policies that he says contributed to the loss of millions of American jobs have yet to become concrete in terms of action.

During a recent visit to China the President blamed his White House predecessors rather than the Chinese for the bilateral trade deficit. In fact,

(Rob's Roost continues on Page 5)



Inside This Issue

- Page 2 Health News
It's Flu Season Again
W-2 Add-On for Life Insurance
- Page 3 1st&2nd Qtr. Business Trends
Outlook Survey
Health News (continued)
W-2 Add-On for Life Insurance
(continued)
- Page 4 FYI
2018 IRS Mileage Rates
2018 SS Maximum Earnings
Correction
2018 Minimum Wage in MI
New Shingles Vaccine
- Page 5 Rob's Roost (continued)
Welcome New Member
TMTA Endorsed Providers
- Page 6 BCBSM Contact
Made in America
Inflation Talk: CPI-W/CPI-U

tmta Calendar of Events

Jan/Feb 2018

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 1/17 | TMTA Board of Directors meets at TMTA offices |
| 2/21 | TMTA Board of Directors meets at TMTA offices |

Visit www.thetmta.com for detailed, up-to-date information on all events..



And It's Flu Season Again!

Flu season is here in full force. How do you know if it is influenza (flu) or a cold? Here are some of the differences: the flu comes on suddenly while a cold is usually gradual. The flu has a high fever (101 or higher) that lasts 3-4 days together with the chills, those symptoms in a cold are rare. The flu causes fatigue, weakness, a cough, and a headache. A cold usually has sneezing, stuffy nose, sore throat, and a lesser degree of a hacking cough.

There's not much you can do to treat a cold, you can treat some of the symptoms and wait it out. Zinc supplements may help ease the common cold along with chicken soup. Chicken soup can inhibit mucus production that will help alleviate a runny nose and cough.

Tamiflu can treat the flu if given within 48 hours of presentation of first symptoms. Antivirals are also often used. You need a prescription from your doctor for an antiviral. A flu vaccine is the best way to **prevent** seasonal influenza while antiviral drugs are the second line of **defense** to treat the flu. They can prevent serious flu complications such as pneumonia in immune compromised patients who are over the age of 65 or have another disease such as asthma, chronic lung disease, endocrine disorders, heart disease, kidney disorders, liver disorders, metabolic disorders, or those with HIV or AIDS or cancer.

The three FDA approved influenza antiviral drugs recommended by the CDC and/or the FDA (Food and Drug Administrations) are: oseltamivir (Tamiflu); zanamivir (Relenza); and peramivir (Rapivab). Tamiflu is available as a pill or liquid; Relenza is a powder that is inhaled so it is not good for people with asthma or COPD; and Rapivab is given intravenously for 15 to 30 minutes.

If you have the flu, stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone without using a fever-reducing medicine, except to get medical care or other necessities. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and discard it immediately. Wash your hands often. Flu travels via droplets in the air and can live on surfaces for up to 24 hours; so make sure to wash your hands often whether you have the flu or not.

It's not too late to get your flu shot if you have not done so already. The flu shot is covered by most insurances.

This year, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has teamed up with Walgreen to allow veterans currently enrolled in the VA health care system to walk into any Walgreen and receive a flu shot at no cost. Vaccinations are available through March 31, 2018.

To receive the free flu shot, veterans will need to present a Veterans Identification Card and photo ID. Walgreen pharmacists will transmit vaccination information securely to the VA where it becomes part of the patient's electronic medical record.

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:

<u>Age at the end of taxable year</u>	<u>Cost per \$1,000 of insurance per month</u>
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, 2017 and contributed \$100 after-tax dollars towards his life insurance premiums.

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

(Health News continued on Page 3)

2018 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 long, long ago! (2016)

1. Describe your company's operation:

Dies, Molds	07%	(16%)
Jigs, Fixtures, Gages	00%	(13%)
Engineering, Technology	00%	(00%)
Stamping, Forging, Casting	04%	(05%)
Manufacturing	25%	(24%)
Machining	32%	(24%)
Tools	14%	(02%)
Special Machines	04%	(05%)
Assemblies	04%	(00%)
Fabrications	07%	(02%)
Prototypes	00%	(02%)
Other	03%	(07%)

2. How is your business now?

Excellent	07%	(07%)
Very good	29%	(14%)
Good	39%	(48%)
Fair	14%	(25%)
Bad	07%	(02%)
Very bad	04%	(04%)

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

Increase substantially	04%	(05%)
Increase moderately	50%	(44%)
Remain the same	46%	(49%)
Decrease moderately	00%	(02%)
Decrease substantially	00%	(00%)

4. Current average work week:

Hours per week	46.3	(47.1)
----------------	------	--------

5. Current employment:

Hourly:	23.77	(32.0)
Salaried:	5.62	(6.7)

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

	Up	Same	Down
Quoting activity	36% (22%)	32% (39%)	32% (39%)
Shipments	36% (32%)	43% (32%)	21% (36%)
Order backlog	18% (18%)	57% (43%)	25% (39%)
Profits	14% (21%)	65% (44%)	21% (22%)
Employment	19% (20%)	74% (60%)	7% (20%)

Comments:

"...very, very slow!.."

Hiring skilled workers in particular machinery repair/maintenance. Personnel is very difficult. (special machines)

very, very slow! (tools)

(Health News continued from Page 2)

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

- Reliance Standard Life Insurance issues W-2's for long-term & 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.





2018 IRS Standard Mileage Rates

The IRS issued the 2018 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, and medical/moving purposes.

Beginning 1/1/18, the rates are as follows:

- Business rates - 54.5 cents
- Medical or moving - 18 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.

Social Security 2018 Maximum Earnings

The Social Security Administration has announced a change in the maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax from \$128,700 to \$128,400. The lower taxable maximum amount is due to corrected W-2s provided to SSA in late October by a national payroll service provider.

The approximately 500,000 corrections for 2016 W-2s caused new bendpoints used in the taxable amount and the computation of SS benefits for people who initially become eligible for SS in the 2018 calendar year. Current beneficiaries are not affected.

2018 Minimum Wage in Michigan

The state minimum wage in Michigan went up from \$8.90/hour to \$9.25/hour effective January 1, 2018. This is the last scheduled wage increase tied to the Workforce Opportunity Wage Act of 2014. Because Michigan's mini-

um wage exceeds the federal minimum wage of \$7.25/hour, Michigan's law controls the minimum wage level in Michigan.

The state's board of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) says any future adjustments to the state's minimum wage may not exceed 3.5% and will be established by the state treasurer based on the unemployment rate and the Midwest Region's Consumer Price Index. Furthermore, inflationary increases do not take effect if Michigan's unemployment rate, determined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, is 8.5% or greater for the year preceding the prescribed increase.

Many feel that if Michigan were to further increase its minimum wage, it would result in our state having one of the highest minimum wage rates in the country, making Michigan uncompetitive in the race for jobs.

New Shingles Vaccine Coming Out

Shingles is caused by the same virus (varicella zoster virus) that causes chickenpox. Once you've had chickenpox, the virus remains alive inside your nerves. It is inactive, but can be reactivated later in life as shingles.

The infected nerves and skin the nerves go to become inflamed, causing a burning or stabbing pain. A few days later, when the virus reaches the skin, a rash of blisters appear along the affected nerve. The skin may be very sensitive to even the lightest touch.

Up to 10% of adults who get shingles experience long-term pain called post-herpetic neuralgia. It can last for months or even years and be responsible for strokes, encephalitis, spinal cord damage and loss of vision.

There has been an immunization available called Zostavax which was recommended for people ages 60 and older and it has shown a 51% reduction in shingles and a 67% reduction of nerve pain.

GlaxoSmithKline has just come out with a new vaccine called Shingrix. Shingrix can be given to people 50 and older and it has shown a 98% reduction in shingles across all age groups.

Zostavax is a single injection and Shingrix requires 2 shots. You can get the Shingrix vaccine even if you have already gotten the Zostavax vaccine. Shingrix should be available sometime early this year. Insurances have indicated it would not be covered, but that will probably change when the vaccine comes out to the public.

(Rob's Roost continued from Page 1)

the deficit has grown since Mr. Trump became President despite his "America First" statements.

The U.S. trade deficit with China during the first ten months of 2016 was US\$289 billion while during the same period of 2017 it had reached US\$309 billion.

Recently there have been signs of the President's intention to act. In unveiling the new national security strategy, China was described as a strategic competitor and that when it comes to trade, the U.S. "will no longer turn a blind eye to violations, cheating or economic aggression".

Certainly, TMTA is just one of many organizations interested in developments on the trade front and, in particular with China. Scott Paul, President of the Alliance for American Manufacturing is quoted recently as having observed "So far, it's been the Teddy Roosevelt philosophy turned on its head: Speak loudly and carry a small stick".

If you see this as a developing drama, then it is surely a drama well worth watching.

The new TMTA Workers' Compensation Plan offerings through the Accident Fund and managed by the Ralph C. Wilson Agency are gaining traction. Be sure to give the Agency a call and speak to Jay Poplawski for the important details and savings.



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

- ❖ **Casemer Tool & Machine, Inc.** located in Oxford MI; they are a job shop specializing in precision machining; visit their website at www.casemer.com.

For more information about the TMTA, our advocacy, events and benefits, visit us at www.thetmta.com

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

Call-A-Doctor - (Telehealth Program)

Provider contact:

Ed Stines 248-524-3221, ext. 21

CAPTRUST (formerly Freedom One Financial)

(401(k) Retirement program)

Provider contact:

John Young 248-620-8100

Euler-Hermes - (Credit insurance program)

Provider contact:

Jay Poplawski 248-355-1414, ext. 158

John M. Packer & Associates

(Unemployment cost control program)

Provider contact:

Nathan Wiest 800-482-2971

G-Tech Lighting - (Electrical savings program)

Provider contact:

Mark Bunting 248-690-6564

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

Rachel Hindelang 248-488-0300, ext. 1310

Results Systems Corporation

(Business management consulting)

Provider contact:

Paul Hindelang 248-244-8550

SVS Vision - (Safety & vision programs)

Provider contact:

Monica Dya 800-611-3683 or www.svsvision.com

Schena Roofing & Sheet Metal Co., Inc. - (roofing)

Provider contact:

586-949-4777

Schooley-Mitchell - (telecom/credit card management)

Provider contact:

Sean Fox 513-683-8881

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.



**Confused about Health Care?
Need help finding the right insurance?
Individual & Group Coverages Available**

**Contact Bill Percha
at 248-355-1414
(Tell Bill that TMTA sent you!)**



tmta talk

TMTA TALK is a publication of the
Tooling, Manufacturing & Technologies Association

28237 Orchard Lake Rd. #101 Phone (248) 488-0300
Farmington Hills, MI 48334 Fax (248) 488-0500
www.thetmta.com

President and CEO — Robert J. Dumont
Editor, Designer — Elaine F. Burger-Laskosky

Copyright © 2017 Tooling, Mfg. & Tech. Assoc. All Rights Reserved.



Please patronize the companies
on our **Made In America** page at
www.theTMTA.com.

INFLATION TALK

CPI-W Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers

Month	82-84	1967	57-59
Dec	240.026	716.454	831.50*
Nov	240.666	716.871	833.71*
Oct	240.573	716.594	834.66*
Sept	240.939	717.684	834.66*
Aug	239.448	713.243	829.49*
July	238.617	710.766	826.62*
June	238.813	711.352	827.29*
May 2017	238.609	710.744	826.59*

CPI-U All Urban Consumers

Month	82-84	1967	57-59
Dec	246.524	738.477	858.83*
Nov	246.669	738.912	859.34*
Oct	246.663	738.893	859.32*
Sept	246.819	739.359	859.86*
Aug	245.519	735.466	855.33*
July	244.786	733.269	852.78*
June	244.955	733.775	853.37*
May 2017	244.733	733.110	852.60*

**Note: December 2017 CPI-W represents a
2.1% increase from one year ago;
CPI-U a 2.1% 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 — .28704470