

WRENCH & WOOD

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Arkansas State Council: Building Strength Through Unity



The Arkansas State Council of Machinists met in North Little Rock, AR November 1st and 2nd at the Wyndham Riverfront Hotel. Members from locals in the Wood, Pulp, and Paper sectors were represented by delegates from Local W484, including the President of the Council Shawn Moorehead.

Newly elected Arkansas AFL-CIO President, Gerald Sale, spoke first and laid out his vision for the future of the labor movement in the state. He asked that we encourage IAM Locals in Arkansas to be more active in their Central Labor Councils, and the state federation.

Then, Woodworkers International Representative Billy Barnwell gave a presentation focusing on the ways by which we should be discussing politics with our members, and how to hold politicians on both sides of the aisle accountable for policies which are damaging to our members. He discussed the negative impacts of the current softwood tariffs on Canadian lumber to the wood, pulp, and paper sectors, and their part in recent plant closure decisions. Finally, he encouraged all locals present to apply for the Chris Waganer Memorial Leadership Grant.

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Arkansas State Council
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After business concluded on the first day, delegates and guests met for fellowship and dinner at the hotel. After a brief morning session on the second day, with reports from the Business Representatives about the Locals under their charge, the meeting was adjourned.

The Arkansas State Council is important to our sector. We have multiple shops in Arkansas who all face the consequences of an environment unfriendly to labor. Thank you to Council President Shawn Moorehead, Secretary Lula Binns, and all the delegates for continuing to fight for the workers of Arkansas.

Trade Watch: Trump Adds 10% Tariff on Canadian Softwood Lumber

On September 29, 2025, President Donald Trump announced an additional **10 percent tariff** on softwood timber and lumber imported into the U.S. from Canada. The tariffs take effect October 14.

These new charges are being levied under **Section 232 of the Trade Act**, with the administration framing them as part of a national-security rationale tied to domestic supply of wood products.

Why It Matters:

- Stacking on existing duties—This isn't the first tariff on Canadian softwood limner. Earlier duties (anti-dumping / countervailing tariffs, plus prior trade-relations disputes) have already raised costs for Canadian exporters.
- According to some reports, with the new 10% added, total duties on certain products could exceed **45 percent**.
- The U.S. is aiming to boost domestic production of timber/lumber, reduce reliance on foreign supply, and re-balance what it views as “unfair” trade practices.
- Canada is the single largest supplier of softwood lumber to the U.S.— meaning this policy has wide ripple effects for Canadian forestry exporters, U.S. construction costs, and a broader trade relations.

Southern IAM Members Strategize to Grow Union Power Across the Region

The proud IAM members of the Southern Territory gathered for the Southern States Conference in Biloxi, Miss. to strategize together for the defense and growth of the union and worker power in the South.

IAM Southern Territory General Vice President Craig Martin reminded delegates of why political activism and coming together with legislative allies is imperative to the survival and success of the union.

“Our strength, our power, our solidarity is real,” said Martin. “We have to use that to engage in political processes to protect what we have and strengthen it for all workers. It’s how we tell those politicians what is important to us.”

IAM International President Brian Bryant spoke to the conference about holding elected officials accountable to the promises they make.

“No matter who is in the White House, we will always back those who support bringing our jobs home, create opportunities to grow unions, and protect our retirement and healthcare,” said Bryant. “But we have to call them out when they don’t.”

Bryant emphasized the importance of thinking into the future and building the next generation of IAM Union members, as well as the next generation of labor activists in our country.

“We’re moving fast in this country; there’s a group of workers who want to form unions, and we are going to be there for them,” said Bryant. “These negotiations and gains for our members create organizing opportunities. It’s an opportunity when we fight an employer and we’re successful, because non-union workers look at it and say ‘we want the same thing for us’.”



BIO-CORNER

Steve Hernandez is a retired Directing Business Representative (DBR) from District 112. He began his machinist career on August 15, 1975, with Local 1128 at St. Mary's Gilman Paper, where he worked until 1998.

Over the years, Steve held several leadership roles, including Vice President/Shop Steward (1989-1991), President of Local 112 (1992-2016), and many others.

Even in retirement, Steve remains active and continues to serve as a Zone 1 E-Board Member for District 243.

This year, Brother Steve proudly received his 50-Year Award and Lifetime Member Card, celebrating decades of commitment and service to the machinists community.

Outside of his union work, Steve has been happily married to his wife Nancy for 33 years. Together, they share three children, and Steve enjoys the simple pleasures of retirement life surrounded by friends and family.

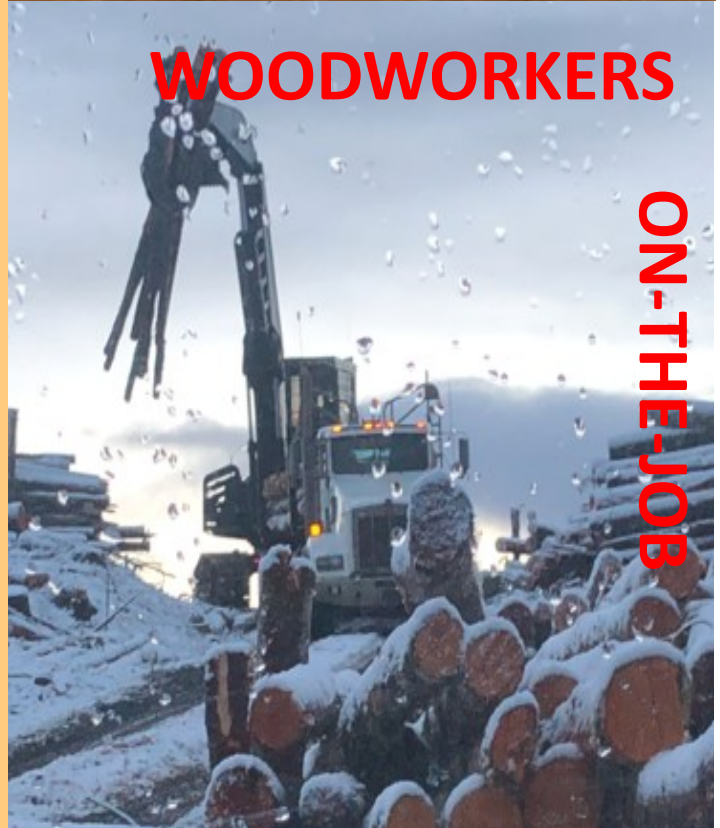


Left: Matt Murdaugh,
President and DBR

Right: Steve Hernandez

WOODWORKERS

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