

# UA 400 hosts pipe trades experience Nov. 11 in Kaukauna

By Brian Roebke  
Editor

Looking for a job? Check the want ads.

Looking for an education? Check out colleges.

Looking for a career? Check out youth apprenticeships with UA 400 Pipe Trades in Kaukauna.

You’ve undoubtedly heard about the low unemployment rate nationwide, but locally, there are hundreds of unfilled jobs in the trades that pay good money.

UA 400 holds its high school open house from 2-5 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 11, at the UA 400 Training Center, located at 2700 Northridge Dr. in Kaukauna’s Industrial Park located north of Highway 41.

That day kicks off National Apprenticeship Week (Nov. 11-17), now in its fifth year, a nationwide celebration that gives businesses, communities and educators the opportunity to showcase their apprenticeship programs and apprentices while providing valuable information to students and career-seekers.

First-year apprentices can make \$20.08 in taxable hourly wages, with a total package of \$30.40 per hour.

The pipe trades include 2,300 members in Northeastern Wisconsin affiliated with UA of Plumbers and Pipefitters, which has its world-class training facility in Kaukauna.

The union provides a referral system for the Mechanical Contractors Association’s 105 signatory contractors. Members are dispatched to projects based on their skills, certifications and ability to perform specific tasks required for the job.

They get that training both at the

union training center and on-the-job sites, where they do more as they learn more skills.

Contractors include Bassett Mechanical, Team Industries, August Winter & Sons, Azco, CR Meyer, Johnson Controls, Piping Service, Tweet Garot and Van Ert Electric, as well as many smaller businesses.

All of these companies have a heavy workload and are always looking for skilled workers to work at paper mills, medical offices, schools, food processing factories, fabrication and shipbuilding.

Trevor Gardner, who graduated from Kimberly High School last spring, attended a boot camp at UA400 last summer for all registered youth apprentices that are connected to a contractor.

Students get hands-on, visual training with a job-site scenario. Youth Apprenticeship Coordinator DJ Klolda likes to find the most softspoken student in the group and make them the foreman for a role-playing experience, showing the crew what they need to do.

“My takeaway was the fitting identification,” Gardner said of the boot camp.

He works at Team Industries and sees fittings, but learned more about them.

“It’s me taking it back to where I work and I see it now and it makes a lot more sense on how it all works,” he said.

When friends asked Gardner what he was planning to do after high school, he told them he was shooting for an apprenticeship at Local 400 because of the training and how they work with contractors

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Brian Roebke photo

UA Local 400 holds its high school open house on Monday, Nov. 11, at the UA 400 Training Center, located at 2700 Northridge Dr. in Kaukauna’s Industrial Park located north of Highway 41. The union provides a referral system for the Mechanical Contractors Association’s 105 signatory contractors including Bassett Mechanical, Team Industries, August Winter & Sons, Azco, CR Meyer, Johnson Controls, Piping Service, Tweet Garot and Van Ert Electric, as well as many smaller businesses.

## Winter collides with fall



Submitted photo

Carie Krause took this photo from her home on Penny Lane in Little Chute on Tuesday morning after the first measureable snow of the winter season came much earlier than usual, with plenty of leaves still on trees. The Heart of the Valley received about three inches of snow Monday night into Tuesday morning, and then a couple more inches on Thursday morning.





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Kaukauna, Little Chute & De Pere



# Kimberly accepts Buchanan land island into village

**By Judy Dixon Hebbe**  
**For the Times-Villager**

The Kimberly Village Board accepted a Town of Buchanan “island” this week when it annexed the 6.7-acre parcel at N684 Marcella St., owned by Benjamin LaFrambois.

The property was completely surrounded by Kimberly. For whatever reason, the property was not part of the annexation request which took in the rest of the neighborhood, creating an island of property for Buchanan. When LaFrambois chose to expand his business to include climate controlled facilities, he discovered that it was less expensive to hook into Kimberly’s sewer and water system than to upgrade the current facilities. He will be paying \$31,313 in a negotiated deferred sanitary sewer assessment.

In two actions relating to Northeast Asphalt, Inc. of Greenville, trustees approved an \$11,260.33 change order relating to the 2019 program in Kimberly and a \$147,391.07 payment for work performed through Oct. 15 on the

same program.

A payment of \$518,525.63 for work performed through Sept. 30 was approved for Vinton Construction Co. for reconstruction on North Pine and Oak streets, and Red and White Cedar Parkway and Papermill Run.

Two payments were approved to Peters Concrete Company: one for a change order of \$238,160 for cleanup on the Rivers Edge subdivision and Treaty Park detention pond and, the second, a final payment of \$131,302.44 for work completed on Oct. 21 for the same project.

Property Solutions Contracting received a partial payment of \$53,55.15 for work performed through Oct. 12 on Treaty Park landscaping.

A public hearing on the 2020 operating budget is held at 6 p.m. on Nov. 11 in the Rick Hermus Council Chambers at the Municipal Complex.

The village board adjourned to a closed session. No action was taken when it reconvened.

# Little Chute School Board approves budget, tax levy

**By Judy Dixon Hebbe**  
**For the Times-Villager**

The Little Chute School Board approved a revised budget of \$5,592,906 and a certified the tax levy at \$9.8962 per thousand for the coming year. The mill rate is down a fraction of a cent from last year.

Base changes in the budget included an increase in students from 1,239 to 1,244, a reduction in state aids from \$8,957,000 to \$8,937,000 and an increase in private school contributions, for which the district taxes.

The baseball team’s request to attend out of state competitions in Yorkville, Ill. and Whiting, Ind. during spring break 2020 was approved. Food and lodging is paid by the student’s parents and funds from the student-based activity account.

The team will travel in vans rented from Les Stumpf Ford. The goal of the trip is to promote team building and bonding and to provide the players with warmer weather to

play in.

Milwaukee Tools, with WTEA, was recognized for donating \$7,500 in power tools for use in the high school, middle school and Little Chute Charter Pathways Academy manufacturing and engineering classes. Plato’s Closet in Appleton was also recognized for a \$40 donation to the district.

The school board accepted Mustang Booster Club donations of \$15,000 for future projects, including \$10,000 for baseball field updates, \$65.25 to both wrestling and dance banquet awards, \$175 for football equipment, \$890 for football end zone camera parts, \$250 for Cal Hammen Stay Classy Award, \$1,168 for girls golf jackets and \$1,520 to \$10/fall athlete donation to SBAA accounts. A \$300 donation from the Hoops Club covers the summer weightlifting meals.

The agreement with the Kaukauna, Kimberly and Little Chute Triumph program was approved.



Steve Wenger and DJ Kloida of UA 400 Pipe Trades with Trevor Gardner, who graduated from Kimberly High School in June, and Steve Masanz, Kimberly High School tech ed teacher.

## Union

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so he can get into the field right away, then get an apprenticeship in the fall.

In five years, he can be a journeyman who makes \$41.26 per hour taxable, with a value of \$20 more per hour in benefits.

“That’s the perfect storyline of a youth apprentice graduating,” Kloida said. “For that to happen, that’s perfect.”

The first day of an apprenticeship is a very important date because that’s when everything starts to accumulate.

Workers already start getting pension contributions in their third year, possibly before they’re 21 years old, and that’s going to be a great asset when they retire because they started so early.

Nels Lawrence, the youth apprenticeship and co-op coordinator at Kaukauna High School, said it’s a very viable field that’s just as important as or more important than fields students are getting a college education for.

Trade organizations contribute equipment to schools to make sure students are learning on relevant equipment, not the World War II-era equipment that many of the parents of today’s students learned to use, only to get to the workforce and not know how to operate equipment being used on the job site.

“The students are pretty proud of the program and they should be,” Lawrence said while Gardner nodded his head in agreement.

Kaukauna, Kimberly and Little Chute high schools are all well known for their industrial and manufacturing programs, and that’s good for students looking to get a head start in the field over students at other schools.

“From a student’s standpoint, they’re part of something pretty important,” Lawrence said, noting they’re getting into a good career.

Students and parents interested in the field can attend the Nov. 11 program, contact the union hall, or go to UA400.org. Union reps can give tours of the facility and email information on how to apply. The union hall is like a technical school with classrooms and a shop just like any school would have. The key is for a student to connect with an employer, and they get assistance from the union to do that.

The retention rates for apprentices is in the mid-90s.

“That’s a credit to our contractors because they vet these candidates and they don’t want to sponsor a kid that’s iffy because there’s a lot of money and time invested in them,” said Jeff Gaecke, vice president of the Mechanical Contractors Association.

The state monitors high school youth apprenticeship and Lawrence said he has about 70 students working in the field, with about 92 percent of them having success. The job offer rate is 100 percent of employers who want to hire the high school apprentice or would hire them if they had a position available.

“The kids that manage to go through the program, the employers say, ‘I’m not going to let that guy go,’” Lawrence said.

Gardner and his teacher, Steve Masanz, said students in the program are the best ambassadors for the program, since they know their friends and classmates and know who would and would not be successful in it.

“They are really good sellers of youth apprenticeship,” Masanz said.

Lawrence said he knows his students also recruit their peers, and if the students pick this pathway and have a good set of hands, they have

a lot of opportunities in the work world.

It’s not unusual for a 25-year old in the apprenticeship program with a house, truck and boat while high school classmates who went to college are struggling to make ends meet.

Gardner is in the fabrication program, grinding fittings that are the foundation of the end product.

“If he doesn’t grind the fittings quite right, it’s going to take longer to fit it and it’s going to take longer to weld it and it’s going to cost Team Industries more to put that piece of pipe out,” said Scott Wenger, Local 400 training coordinator.

UA 400 is like an employment agency that works the contractors.

The apprenticeship is a three-pronged approach that includes the local union, the contractors and the State of Wisconsin.

If a person and company don’t find a good fit, the union can find another location for that person to work that may be a better fit.

“I use the sports analogy, if it’s not working out with the Packers, he’s going to the Lions or some other team,” Wenger said.

Should one company have a slowdown, the union can find another company in the system and keep their pay and benefits. An employer can call the union and ask for 15 people the next week and they will get them without having to go through the hiring process because they trust the union’s ability to give them good people.

The workers get paid through the company, but their benefits come from both labor and management.

Perhaps the best part of the program is that students don’t have college debt, and an even better part is they get paid to learn, and when they become journeymen, they can earn \$80,000 or more per year with regular hours. Foremen make an additional \$2.50 to \$5 per hour. Workers can earn more than \$100,000 per year by working overtime.

During the Nov. 11 “Pipe Trades Experience,” students and parents can talk to experts in pipefitting, fabrication, plumbing, and HVACR service as well as meeting with UA 400 reps, tour the training facility, and win door prizes.

To register, RSVP to Kloida at [djkloida@ua400.org](mailto:djkloida@ua400.org) by Nov. 8.



Email photos  
**Times-Villager**  
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# Wedding Announcements

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