



Site Search Search Local Business Listings

Brought to you by:

Search by keyword, town name, Web ID and more...

Submit Query



- Home News Weather Sports Entertainment Interact Jobs Autos Real Estate Classifieds Shopping Place An Ad
- News Politics Crime Business Obituaries State News AP News Opinion Videos Reader Republican Photo Galleries

ALLEGRIA OPENS ON SEPTEMBER 16 IN AMHERST - DONT MISS IT! [BOOK NOW](#)

The Republican.

- 14-Day Archive | Paid Archives
- Subscribe to the Print Edition
- Today's Paper & More

LOCAL TOWN COVERAGE >>

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Agawam | Granby | Palmer |
| Amherst | Greenfield | South Hadley |
| Belchertown | Hadley | Southampton |
| Berkshires | Hampden | Southwick |
| Chicopee | Holyoke | Springfield |
| Deerfield | Longmeadow | Ware |
| E. Longmeadow | Ludlow | W. Springfield |
| Easthampton | Monson | Westfield |
| Franklin County | Northampton | Wilbraham |

NEWS >>

With The Republican.

Browse by category:

Select a category

Browse by day:

Select a date

Browse by week:

Select a date

LINKS >>

Special Sections:

- 14-day Archive
- WMass Blogs
- Business news
- Columnists
- Editorials
- MA Engagements
- MA Graduations
- Letters to the Editor
- Western MA Living
- MA Obituaries
- Politics
- Religion news
- Videos
- WMass Weather
- MA Weddings

Daily Print Editions:

- Chicopee / Holyoke
- Hampshire / Franklin
- Metro East
- Metro West
- Springfield

Plus Print Editions:

- Chicopee Plus
- Holyoke Plus
- Metro East Plus
- Metro South Plus
- Metro West Plus
- Neighborhoods Plus
- Westfield Plus

INTERACT >>

- sarcastiksba -- "Posted by gridirons on 08/31/...
- nicholz12 -- no forgiveness in you folks, h...
- arthurg -- Oh, yes...

Recession grinding on machine shops

Tuesday, August 25, 2009

By JIM KINNEY
Business writer

WESTFIELD - A trade group of local machine shops has shifted its focus from developing a work force of skilled machinists to simply finding enough business to keep each other afloat.

"The little guys are in tough shape," said Larry A. Maier, a past president of the Western Massachusetts Chapter of the National Tooling & Machining Association. "I haven't seen a lot of closings. But there are companies on the brink."

Maier, president of Peerless Precision Inc. in Westfield, acted as host Monday for the chapter's third annual pig roast. Creative Machining and Molding Corp., also of Westfield, co-hosted.

Advertisement

[CONTINUE STORY](#)



He said it's a chance for machine shops owners to network and learn of opportunities, such as subcontracting for each other if one company has the ability to perform a manufacturing operation another company lacks.

"This is all about relationships," he said. "My own projections for business next year is either 10 percent lower than last year or 10 percent greater than last year."

A few years ago, all the talk at chapter meetings was about work force, where companies such as Peerless are going to get young people trained to use computer-controlled machining equipment. The recession has cooled that talk a bit even though most members have avoided laying off workers. Peerless had to reduce hours for its 22 employees, Maier said.

"The reason for that is that these people are so hard to replace if they go elsewhere," Maier said. "That's why we have to keep the new-employee pipeline going, even if just a little bit. Because if it stops, it will take us at least five years to get it going."

The Western Massachusetts Chapter of the National Tooling and Machining Association has about 70 members and associate members in the Pioneer Valley, including gun giant Smith & Wesson in Springfield. All told, they have about 3,500 employees. Of the 70 members, about 38 are machine shops averaging about 20 employees each. Those shops are centered in Westfield, Chicopee, Enfield and Holyoke, he said.

Experienced machine operators earn \$60,000 to \$70,000 a year. He starts out new machinists just out of trade schools at \$35,000.



DAILY PHOTOS >>



View photos from all around the Pioneer Valley!

[DAILY PHOTOS >>](#)

- [Symphony Hall. Once ...](#)
- [life4takin -- deep6spfld ... I wish you were...](#)
 - [whysostupid1 -- Sarcastic!! Your a freaking mo...](#)
 - [RealityFlash -- Ted Kennedy: The Senator of Sl...](#)
 - [RealityFlash -- This was ALWAYS THE FAULT OF B...](#)
 - [IowaCowboy -- Aren't they supposed to be rep...](#)
 - [gridirons -- Cardenales. Good question on t...](#)

ONLINE ADS

Gus Coelho Auto Repair



Online ad expires 9/1/2009

More For Your Money Monday



Online ad expires 9/1/2009

Rocky Mountain Wood Co., Inc.



Online ad expires 9/1/2009

[View more ONLINE ADS >](#)

Ronald E. Overton, president of the National Tooling & Machining Association, said the national group started the year with 1,633 members and is now down to 1,550. He said business is off at least 10 percent, more in the Midwest where most machine shops mostly made parts of the auto industry.

Overton attended the pig roast.

In the Pioneer Valley, companies are more likely to build parts for the defense, aerospace and medical-implant industries.

But the problem is small machine shops are dependent on orders from bigger companies, said E. David Smith, an owner at G and L Tool Corp. in Agawam.

"We don't make a product," Smith said. "We make a different product every month."

He said he expects to have his 12 blue-collar employees back working 40-hour weeks soon. His company just bought a \$100,000 piece of equipment.

"If you don't keep up with the latest technology, you might as well close the doors," he said.

Jim Kinney can be reached at jkinney@repub.com

Get A Fixed Mortgage Now

\$200,000 for Only \$1,074/Month, Fixed Rate for Life at LendingTree
www.LendingTree.com

Mass Health Insurance

Find Affordable Health Insurance In Massachusetts. Fast Results.
Mass-Health.org

"Crazy White Teeth"

Dentists don't want you to know THIS teeth whitening secret.
American-Derma-Society.org

ASK THE MAYOR >>



Holyoke Mayor:

- [Podcast 11: Ward meetings, street clean-up, and more](#)



Chicopee Mayor:

- [This Week's Ask Mayor Bissonnette: Renovating Mills, Leasing Golf Carts, and Entertaining Elders](#)

OPINION >>



From The Republican:

- [Letters: Citizens hypocritical about government help](#)
- [Ed Reform, Part 2: school regionalization](#)

OBITUARIES >>



Celebrate a life and share your thoughts and precious memories in our online guestbook.

[BROWSE OBIT LISTINGS >>](#)

CHICOPEE FORUM >>

- [ANOTHER TRUE EXPERIENCE](#) by [Libra73710](#)
- [SHOULD BE UNDER # 20835](#) by [Libra73710](#)

HOLYOKE FORUM >>

- [Lost Cat](#) by [InMyCity4](#)
- [Chief Scott crying...](#) by [Oldhag44](#)

SOUTH HADLEY FORUM >>

- [what is every ones...](#) by [SycDog](#)
- [Republicans have it all...](#) by [polishpucker](#)

GRANBY FORUM >>

- [I have no problem...](#) by [Alidon](#)
- [Everyone Needs to go to...](#) by [Alidon](#)

SITE TOOLS

- [E-mail page](#)
- [Print page](#)
- [Search site](#)
- [Newsletters](#)
- [RSS feeds](#)
- [Reddit](#)
- [Digg](#)
- [del.icio.us](#)
- [Google](#)
- [Yahoo](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

- [Find yourself in a Jeep. Click here.](#)
- [The home of your dreams starts with Landmark Realtors. Click now!](#)
- [Register Now for Fall Classes!](#)
- [You'll Do Better at Balise!](#)



Site Search Search Local Business Listings

Search by keyword, town name, Web ID and more...

Submit

[Site Index](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Contact us](#)

[Make us your home page](#)

[Home](#) | [News](#) | [Weather](#) | [Sports](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Interact](#) | [Living](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Autos](#) | [Real Estate](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Shopping](#) | [Place an Ad](#)

- [Your Photos](#)
- [Your Videos](#)
- [Blogs](#)
- [Forums](#)
- [Travel](#)
- [Music](#)

- [Post a job](#)
- [Post a free classified ad](#)
- [Sell your car](#)
- [Sell/Rent your home](#)
- [Apartments & Rentals](#)
- [Claim your Business Listing for free](#)

- [Obituaries](#)
- [Red Sox](#)
- [High School Sports](#)
- [Newsletters](#)
- [Weather](#)
- [Television](#)

- [Subscribe to our content \(RSS\)](#)
- [MassLive.com Twitter feed](#)
- [MassLive.com News Widgets](#)
- [MassLive.com Podcasts](#)
- [MassLive.com Mobile site](#)



Subscribe to **The Republican** today and get incredible savings off home delivery! [Subscribe Now](#) | [Press Pass](#)

© 2009 MassLive.com LLC. All Rights Reserved. Use of this site constitutes acceptance of our [User Agreement](#). Please read our [Privacy Policy](#). [Community Rules](#) apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site. [Contact interactivity management](#).