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Companies should hire local workers

August 19, 2012

The Herald-Star

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To the editor:

It appears that the saga of the gas and oil industry not hiring local workers has resurfaced again. Last month, members of the local Laborers International were picketing to protest jobs not going to local skilled workers by a company in the oil and gas industry.

There are plenty of local qualified workers, or soon-to- be qualified through local colleges, who could be hired by the industry, but the companies will not hire them. I went to the job fair held recently in Belmont County and it was a sham. We have licensed truck drivers, welders, electricians, pipe fitters and laborers who need work and are a large part of this valley. There were jobs offered at that fair, but the industry participants knew quite well that they held extremely high qualifications in order to rule out local workers seeking employment.

What amazes me is that there are all these motels and campsites growing in our area to accommodate out-of-state workers. Why? Instead of building new motels to hold all these transient workers why not have local people doing a large part of these jobs? What's wrong with a company from Ripley, drilling in Ohio, hiring Ohio workers? I don't think a laborer is more skilled from Ripley than Wintersville. I am quite sure all those workers living in RVs are the most highly skilled workers in the industry. They follow the work because of their special skills. If you believe that, I guess you believe in Santa Claus as well.

What it boils down to is that the industry wants its own people at their price and will not consider local workers who want to get into the industry. What happens when the trained and qualified workers emerge from the local colleges and find that they to are not wanted by the industry because they don't fit the profile of a typical drilling industry worker?

Frank Papini

Bridgeport

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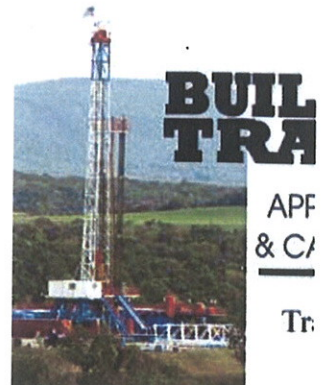
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