

Iron Workers 'top out' new Kaiser Medical Center

Kaiser Permanente celebrated the "topping out" of its new Kaiser Westside Medical Center in Hillsboro at a ceremony April 12.

Members of Iron Workers Local 29 and Operating Engineers Local 701 hoisted the final 36-foot long, two-ton beam to the fourth floor roof of the patient bed tower before an audience of business and civic leaders from Wash-

ington County, as well several union officials. Many of those dignitaries signed the beam, which is part of the over 4 million pounds of steel that make up the structure.

"Topping out" is a tradition of the Iron Workers that signifies the completion of a building's structure, honoring the work thus far, and to bring the building good luck, said Kevin Jensen, business manager of Iron Workers Local 29.

Between 25 to 30 ironworkers employed at The Erection Company worked on the project.

According to Kaiser Regional President Andy McCulloch, the Kaiser Permanente Westside Medical Center is the largest commercial construction project currently under way in the Portland Metro area and is the first newly built hospital here in nearly 40 years.

The \$360 million project will bring over 2,000 construction jobs and 1,100 permanent, family wage jobs when the hospital opens in 2013, McCulloch said. By the time the hospital is completed, nearly \$60 million in wages to local workers will have been paid, money that ripples out into the area's economy. Already, workers have put in

Unionists will bowl for MDA on April 25

The 21st annual Labor Bowl Challenge to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) will be held Sunday, April 25, from 1 to 4 p.m. at Hollywood Bowl, 4030 NE Halsey St., Portland. Registration starts at noon.

Portland area labor unions have collected \$301,328.75 for the charity since its inception. Money goes to buy wheelchairs and braces for children, as well as research and summer camps.

For more information, call Jim Cook, president of Letter Carriers Branch 82, at 503-493-5903, or MDA at 503-223-3177.



Chris Aldrich (left) and Giles Phillips shake hands after connecting the last iron beam at the Kaiser Westside Medical Center in Hillsboro. The two connectors are members of Iron Workers Local 29 employed at The Erection Company. Kaiser Permanente and the Iron Workers held a "topping out" ceremony April 12. Topping out is a tradition of the union that signifies the completion of a building's structure and to bring good luck. Hoisting the beam into place was Dan Thompson, a member of Operating Engineers Local 701.

over 65,000 hours on the job.

"In our sense, it's our own little stimulus project here to help the econ-

omy," McCulloch said.

The Medical Center will open with 126 beds, but has room to grow to up

to 240 beds. The hospital will offer emergency, general medical, maternity, and surgical care.

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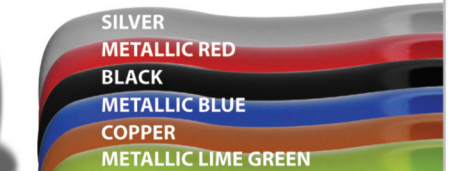
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