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JULY 10



THE TIMES

Sunday, April 19, 2026

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NWI STEEL TIED TO NATION'S RISE



JOHN J. WATKINS, FILE, THE TIMES

U.S. Steel Gary Works

Region mills pivotal to development in US in 1900s

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Northwest Indiana was the perfect spot for the steel industry to flourish. Iron mined in Minnesota and Michigan could easily be transported across the Great Lakes and turned into steel, American Iron and Steel Institute President and CEO Kevin Dempsey said. Those states produce an overwhelming majority of the iron in the U.S. The institute came to be in the late 19th century, as the industry in Northwest Indiana began to flourish with the creation of Indiana Harbor and soon after, the founding of U.S. Steel Gary Works.

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America at 250: The story still unfolding
This story is part of an ongoing series exploring the 250th anniversary of the United States in 2026. Visit our website to read other stories in the series and share your own.

An advertisement for a Letz Mill Model 220X in the Jan. 6, 1954, edition of the Vidette-Messenger.



FORGED IN SERVICE Region men answered call to arms in Civil War

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A Valparaiso Army colonel took two bullets in battle, each time pulling himself back up into the fray to command some 100 Hoosier men in bloody combat. Another colonel, from Crown Point, sat high atop his horse on the second day of the bloodiest battle in American history, urging calm among his Indiana volunteer troops — dozens of them from Northwest Indiana. His bravery earned him a Confederate sniper's bullet to the head and death in a Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, wheatfield. A year before, that same colonel wrote an emotional letter to the parents of a fallen friend — a sergeant in his unit — breaking the solemn news that a prevalent disease in Army ranks had killed their son. And a 14-year-old Valparaiso boy became perhaps one of the youngest Hoosier war veterans ever, following his father, a volunteer Army captain, into

Please see **CIVIL WAR**, Page A10

FORGED IN STEEL A family's 55-year legacy

In a fitting tribute to family love and professional pride, Anthony Dujmovich keeps a pair of his late father's work boots on a shelf in his garage.



JERRY DAVICH

"It's a living reminder that I'm still following in his work shoes," he said. "My brother and I are carrying on the tradition in the steel industry that my father and his own brother began in 1969." Dujmovich's father, Tony Dujmovich, and his father's brother, John Dujmovich Sr., both hired in at Bethlehem Steel that year, just five years after the mill began operations. Built on 3,300 acres in Porter County along Lake Michigan, it was considered one of the last new, fully integrated steel plants built in the U.S.

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How Northwest Indiana Helped Build America

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