

# FIRST LOCAL NEWS

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September 2018

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UAW Local 249 Treasurer Chrissy Kline, left to right, and her husband UAW 249 member Rory Bowen spoke at the America Needs Unions rally held on Aug. 16th at Oppenstein Brothers Memorial Park in Kansas City. They spoke about what it means to have a union backing you. Being a part of a union has given them access to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Photo by Don Lehman.

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UAW Local 249 swore in new members at the August union meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.



Gary Thomas, Chairperson of the UAW Local 249 Motorcycle Committee, showed off his motorcycle to the children who attended the annual Apostolic Church of God's East Side Community Day. Photo by Don Lehman.



UAW Local 249 member Taylor Kreinheder collects donations for the Salvation Army's Children's Shelter from member Rick Murphy. Photo by Don Lehman.

## First Local News

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## UAW Local 249

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## Officers of Local 249

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The Regular Membership Meeting of United Automobile Workers Amalgamated Local Union 249 is held on the third Sunday of each month at 2:00 p.m. in the local union hall, 8040 NE 69 Highway, Pleasant Valley, Mo. The Executive Board Meeting is held at 1:00 p.m. prior to the Regular Membership Meeting.

## UAW-Ford Joint Programs

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## Supreme court nominees impact unions

By Gary Jones

**A**t the UAW, we often quote Walter Reuther's famous statement that there is a direct relationship between the ballot box and the bread box.

That connection has rarely been more evident than what we're seeing with the nomination of Brett Kavanaugh to the United States Supreme Court. His confirmation could cement a right-leaning majority on the court for years to come — a court that will be reviewing and deciding labor laws that will impact generations of working Americans. Already, the current court, even with retired Justice Anthony Kennedy's swing vote, has altered the landscape of working voices through a series of damaging decisions.

The 2010 U.S. Supreme Court Citizens United decision gave a greater voice to corporations by allowing for "super PACs" that can raise unlimited amounts of contributions for political activities. During the 2016 election, the Citizens United decision led to just 40 individual business donors giving more than \$1 billion to campaigns and super PACs alone.

In 2016, unlimited big business donations dwarfed labor contributions by a 16 to 1 margin. Even among corporate versus labor PACs, big business held a 7 to 1 fundraising advantage.

Slowly over the course of a decade, the combination of unlimited campaign spending and gerrymandering created a perfect storm of anti-worker officeholders and legal appointments awaiting the day that the Supreme Court could have a pro-business majority.

In fact, in the past year the court has:

- Allowed lifetime retiree health care benefits to be cut: Reversed over a

decade of court precedence in the case of *Reese v. CNH* to allow for employers to unilaterally drop or cut retiree health care even if the company had said the benefits were intended for life. Longtime retirees at Honeywell in Indiana and CNH in Illinois now find their benefits cut with no say in the process due to the court's reversal.

- Forced workers to arbitrate disputes instead of suing employers as a group: In the case of *Epic Systems v. Lewis* the court reversed a long held standard that no class action or collective actions by workers are allowed. Instead workers now have to arbitrate disputes one-by-one, diluting their collective voices.

- Weakened the bargaining power of public sector workers: In the case of *Janus v. AFSCME*, the court reversed long time precedence in determining that workers who opt out of public sector unions no longer have to pay fair-share fees even while unions are still obligated to represent those non-union workers.

Judge Kavanaugh, at 53, will impact the court's rulings for decades. A review of his 300 decisions on the books, clearly show a corporate bent — chiefly his decision to undermine the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, established by Congress after the bank collapses and auto crisis during the great recession.

Politics do matter. Who we elect matters. And solidarity still matters. The only way to preserve our way of life, workplace safety and our fair wages is by speaking and voting together.

## Labor News From the World Wide Web

# The Picket Line

## The little people against the giants

**I**t may not be exactly a David-Goliath battle, but proponents of Amendment 1, which will be on the November ballot, are the little people up against wealthy lobbyists and many legislators in pushing for major reforms in state government.

The little people have an organization called Clean Missouri, which has some funding, but nothing compared to what big money and powerful lobbyists and legislators can muster.

Amendment 1 would eliminate nearly all gifts to members of the General Assembly; require that legislative records be open to the public; establish a two-year waiting period for General Assembly members to become lobbyists after leaving office; lower campaign gifts to legislative candidates; and ensure that neither party is given an unfair advantage when new district maps are drawn after census figures are known.

Politicians, that is many of them, are attacking Amendment 1 because of the redistricting requirement. They don't want to give added public attention to gifts to members of the General Assembly, campaign contributions, the influence lobbyists have due to the money-force they represent and the current secrecy in government. — *The Washington Missourian Editorial*

## Raise Missouri's minimum wage

**T**his November, Missourians will have the opportunity to vote "Yes" on Proposition B to raise the minimum wage in our state. This initiative is very reasonable and conservative by raising the minimum wage 85 cents a year over five years, which would make the minimum wage \$12 per hour in 2023. The sad truth is the cost of basic necessities have gone up for years, yet Missourians working 40 hours a week at the state minimum wage of \$7.85 earn only \$314 per week, or just over \$16,000 per year.

When people have only this small amount of income to spend, it also means businesses in our state don't have as much income. If people earn less, they spend less. They delay repairing their car, they don't go out to eat, they buy less clothing, etc. If people have more, they spend more and businesses make more and also are able to hire more help.

In fact, one study found that the number of small businesses and people working in small businesses increased more in states with higher minimum wages than in states with wages set at the lower federal minimum.

That's why nearly 350 businesses from across Missouri have already endorsed the initiative to increase that state's minimum wage gradually to \$12. *Charlie O'Reilly, Springfield News-Leader*

## Why Missouri 'right to work' went down

**L**abor's win in Missouri defies current wisdom about the decline of unions. We won with an even greater percentage of no votes than in the celebrated 1978 defeat of right to work in Missouri—despite the fact that union density has fallen by two-thirds since then.

Amazingly, even if none of Missouri's quarter-million union members had voted, right to work would still have been defeated. Given the number of ballots cast in the Republican primary, at least a third of the no votes must have come from Republicans.

Only four counties favored Clinton over Trump in the last presidential election. Yet 100 of Missouri's 115 counties voted no on right to work.

The campaign was statewide and primarily volunteer-driven, though some paid canvassers were hired too. "It was a very personal issue for a quarter-million Missourians," said Jessica Podhola, who took leave from her job at the Painters union to work on the campaign. "That's what turned so many volunteers out."

Teams of union and community volunteers went out daily, through merciless heat in July, talking to the same voters sometimes two or three times. — *Judy Ancel, Labor Notes*

# UAW Local 249 members show they care

By Gwen Starkey

**U**AW Local 249 membership along with Ford Motor Company stepped up in a big way accepting the challenge of changing a child's life by donating \$19,025.44 to the Salvation Army Children's Shelter during a recent gate collection. They presented the funds during the annual KMBZ Caring for Kids Radiothon at the Oak Park Mall August 9.

The Salvation Army approached UAW Local 249 and asked them to do a fundraiser for the Children's Shelter and of course, they said yes. "It was a joint project between UAW and Ford and we decided to have a two day collection starting on Thursday Aug. 2nd and Friday Aug. 3rd," UAW Local 249 Community Services Chairperson Kim Rowland said.

On August 3, Fox 4 news came out and shot several live broadcasts showing everyone that was helping collect and those donating. Major Dave Harvey from Salvation Army was there and they provided the kettles, buckets, bells, and aprons. Everyone had a fun time with this gate collection.

"I feel that our membership turnout was great," Nathan Himes said. Himes who is a member of the UAW Local 249 Community Services Committee worked the main gate collecting donations. "Fox 4 news was there and the Salvation Army had their Ford Transit parked out front. It seems like members were overwhelmingly supportive of this great cause and I was happy to be a part of it."

The Salvation Army Children's Shelter sometimes is the last resort for many of our area children who are unable to stay at home because of family issues. Serving over 7000 kids, this safe haven has been operating around the clock, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year

for the last 30 years and plans to continue for as long as a child needs them. The shelter provides care for up to 20 children through age 17 and is the largest emergency children's shelter in the Kansas City area. Their services also allow siblings to stay together instead of the possibility of separation in foster care system.

This is comforting for a child who is in the middle of something they have no control over. Your generous donations are what keep this great organization afloat.

"We had close to 30 volunteers that participated in both the morning and the afternoon shift to collect donations," Rowland said. That was pretty cool. Our membership raised a whopping \$9,025.44 and Ford's Department of Governmental Affairs kicked in another \$10,000 for a grand total of \$19,025.44. That's fantastic. This was an amazing amount of money. Just look at all the children that we are going to be able to help with that."

For the first time, Rowland turned the gate organization reins over to fellow Community Services member Sadie Bass. "This was her very first time organizing a gate collection and she did an awesome job. There were only a few hiccups which is absolutely normal," Rowland said. I was so proud of the work that she did. It's quite a chore getting a gate collection together and



UAW Local 249 along with Ford's Department of Governmental Affairs made a \$19,025.44 donation to the Salvation Army's Children's Shelter during the annual KMBZ Caring for Kids Radiothon at the Oak Park Mall August 9. Photo by Don Lehman.

she rocked it."

"I would like to thank the diversity and inclusion team for allowing the Community Services Committee to be part of this great fundraiser," Sadie Bass said. I think the gate collection was a big success and I'm very thankful that the monies raised stay locally here in Kansas City. We've been invited to the shelter for a visit and I cannot wait to go see the great things that the Salvation Army is doing."

UAW Local 249 and Ford Motor Company were the first big donors to present a check and they helped the Caring for Kids Radiothon get things kicked off. "We challenged some other donors

to call in and donate," Rowland said.

UAW Local 249 President Jason Starr along with Tony Reinhart, of Ford's Department of Governmental Affairs made the on air presentations to the Salvation Army.

"We have a long tradition within the UAW and the Ford department of really standing tall and working with our community," Starr said. Not only does the membership of the United Autoworkers of Local 249 build the highest quality best-selling vehicles in the country, we work hard to build strong communities around our facility and the Kansas City area. So on behalf of our nearly 7000 plus members of UAW Local 249, it's my distinct honor and privilege to present a check for \$9,025.44."

"The Salvation Army leads the way and it's a long-standing partnership that the UAW has had with the Salvation Army," Starr said. I was telling a story earlier remembering my first year working at Ford when the toys for tots drive was in the plant. It's something our folks get excited about and it's a true representation of who we are as an institution and they're a great partner organization."

When asked why UAW Local 249 continues to collaborate with the Salvation Army, Starr said, "With the membership that we have, we see it on a tangible level. Many of our folks in times of need, the Salvation Army has stepped in and helped them, it's something that we see directly from the Salvation Army."

## Yes on Amendment 1 to end political corruption in Missouri

**M**issouri voters will have a chance this November to increase integrity, transparency, and accountability in state government.

Passage of Amendment 1 will:

- eliminate almost all lobbyist gifts in the General Assembly

- require that legislative records be open to the public

- lower campaign contribution limits for state legislative candidates

- require politicians to wait two years if they want to become lobbyists

- ensure that neither political party is given an unfair advantage when new maps are drawn after the next census, by adding criteria for fairness and competitiveness of the overall map, which will be reviewed by a citizen

commission and keep compact and contiguous districts

"Amendment 1 is a chance to increase fairness, integrity and transparency in government," said Kathleen Boswell, President of the League of Women Voters of Missouri.

"Year after year, politicians are re-elected with big money, in districts drawn by politicians and party insiders. Amendment 1 limits the influence of special interests in the legislature and ensures no party is given an unfair advantage when redistricting occurs after the next census. Amendment 1

establishes clear, transparent criteria to ensure fair and competitive maps, which are reviewed by a citizens' commission."

"Amendment 1 will ensure fair and competitive elections so elected officials cannot take their voters for granted and must earn their support," said Republican former U.S. Senator John Danforth.

"I'm proud to be part of a bipartisan group of reformers to ensure voters come first — and that Missourians' voices will always be heard in our democracy. Amendment 1 will increase integrity, transparency, and accountability in state government."





*Tylarrah Cunningham, daughter of UAW Local 249 member Joshua Woodley, won first place in the Charlie Suffrage Scholarship essay contest, writing about how right to work is cancerous to unions and labor workers across the United States. Below are excerpts from her winning essay. Photo by Don Lehman.*

# Scholarship winner: "Right to work is wrong"

*By Tylarrah Cunningham*

**R**ight-to-Work is cancerous to unions and labor workers across the United States. Starting in the 19th Century, the objective of right-to-work is to dismantle the structure and solidarity of unions. Currently, there are 28 right-to-work states. Right-to-work does not create jobs, in fact, it has a negative effect on the state of the economy.

Additionally, right-to-work is divisive in many ways, and is a tactic used to lessen support and advocacy for labor workers. Without union support, workers can be exposed to unfair treatment, discrimination, and/or termination for any minor infraction. Unions fight for jobs, benefits, and better wages for their members. The support from unions has been ingrained in American history for quite some time. Unions have fought for many years in solidarity to secure jobs and keep America thriving.

There are hundreds of unions throughout the United States that continue to fight for the protection of

their membership. This is the fight of any union. Without unions, there is no protection. Now we will discuss why right-to-work is wrong for working men and women.

Right-to-work is wrong for working men and women because it lowers wages for all working people, including non-union members. Workers living in right-to-work states generally earn less money annually than those that don't.

Right-to-work states also tend to have more work-related deaths, and more often than not, workers living in these states don't have health insurance. This is why unions are of vital

importance to society. Unions play a pivotal role in securing legislated labor protections and rights such as safety, health, overtime, and family/medical leave and enforcing those rights on the job. Without union representation, workers do not have adequate protection.

Here in Missouri, Proposition A is scheduled to be voted upon in August of 2018, and many are fearful of this because it is a government overreach into the workforce. Not only does Proposition A give more money back to large corporations, but it's also a direct attack on union members and their wages. Thankfully, I had the opportunity to speak directly to two active UAW Local 249 members about right-to-work and the effects of Proposition A. Kenny Seeley, who has twenty-five years of experience as an auto worker, is a third-generation auto worker in his family. He currently holds the position

on night-shift committeemen in the Ford Kansas City Stamping Plant.

I also spoke with LaMar Taylor, who has worked in three different UAW locals over the past twenty years and is currently trustee of the worker to worker committee. Here is what he had to say on the matter.

"What these companies do not tell you is that there are several protected rights that are negotiated by labor unions, such as seniority, wage progressions, low cost medical, dental and health insurance plans and safety measures, that are put in place to protect workers from injury and even death. Proposition A is a direct attack on labor unions and their effectiveness to maintain and organize their strength against these major companies by creating a system of division within labor unions. Companies want separation amongst all workers including their own divide and conquer theory,"





UAW Local 249 Treasurer Chrissy Kline, left to right, and her husband UAW 249 member Rory Bowen spoke at the America Needs Unions rally held on Aug. 16th at Oppenstein Brothers Memorial Park in Kansas City. They spoke about how life as a Walmart worker with low wages and part time hours, could not afford them a decent living. Photo by Don Lehman.

# Chrissy Kline: “What my union means to me”

*By Chrissy Kline*

**M**y name is Chrissy Kline and I am a union member. I am a member of Local 249 of the United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, or as we call it, the UAW. I work at the Ford Plant in Claycomo on the assembly line as a utility. What that means is that if someone has the day off, calls in or has an emergency I've got to jump on their job for the day. I've been at Ford for five years with my husband Rory. Being a union member at Ford has totally and completely changed every aspect of our lives as a working family.

I know the difference a union makes. How do I know that? Well, before I became a union member, I worked for the largest employer in America, Walmart. I started working at Walmart in Pennsylvania, where I'm originally from. I worked there for three years as an overnight shift worker. As an overnight stocker, I made a little bit more an hour. I thought I got lucky because I made a dollar more

than those on the day shift. I started at \$8.90 an hour. When I left for Ford, three years later, I was making about \$10 an hour.

How did my husband and I even end up at Walmart you might ask? Well like many people during the recession, my husband, Rory lost his job through no fault of his own. He had a great job as a fire protection engineer for nearly 20 years. He designed sprinkler systems for

homes and commercial use. When the housing bubble popped so did his job. Rory was unemployed for a year and a half. He couldn't find any job in his field or one with comparable wages.

At that same time he was unemployed, I was the first in my family to go college and was finishing my master's degree at Gannon University in Erie, Pennsylvania. I graduated in 2010 with a Masters in Community Counseling. And like Rory, I couldn't find work in my field. I was meeting people with college degrees in my field who were helping others with addiction, depression, and suicide who were making just a little bit over minimum wage. That was devastating. I felt like I had wasted seven years of my life and only had \$75,000 of student debt to show for it.

So as the unemployment ran out

for Rory, and I couldn't find a job in my field, we had to take whatever we could find. We were about to lose everything. I remember Rory saying, "I will even take a job at Walmart or McDonald's if I have to," and he did. I was shocked to find out I would make more at Walmart than in my field with a master's degree. I followed him into Walmart a few weeks later.

What was life like as a Walmart worker? Miserable would be the answer.

When we were working at Walmart we couldn't get full-time hours despite begging and pleading for them. Management would not give them to us and it kept us constantly struggling. Even an extra day a week would've helped to pay the bills.

But Walmart wouldn't give me,

Continued on next page



# The plot to reverse Missouri RTW victory

By Pat Hayes

**M**issouri voters could be forgiven if they feel as though they woke up after the August 7 primary election trapped in the 1993 classic Bill Murray film, "Groundhog Day," in which he plays a TV weatherman caught in a time loop, repeating the same day over and over again.

When Missouri voters went to bed August 7, they rightly believed working people had scored a rare victory with the defeat of right to work in the Missouri primary election. When given a chance to have their say, 67.5 percent of voters rejected a law passed repeatedly in recent years by the very state legislators who are supposed to represent them.

When the ballots were counted election night, the result accurately reflected the widespread opposition to right to work represented by the thousands of Vote No yard signs that popped up like mushrooms after a summer rain in every part of the state before the vote.

On right to work, both urban and rural voters across the state spoke as one. Ninety-nine of Missouri's 114 counties sent a resounding message to their own state representatives and senators: "Stop attacking the working class."

Seemingly, the very next morning, as if the vote had never been taken, these same voters woke to a chorus of voices already planning shove right to work down the throats of an unwilling public.

"A right to work bill will be filed in the next session despite the recent setback," Republican Sen. Caleb Rowden of Columbia told Missourinet reporter Jason Taylor soon after right to work went down in flames.

Jeremy Cady, state director for Americans for Prosperity, the front group funded by the billionaire Koch brothers, published an Op-Ed in the Kansas City Star after the primary saying the group will ignore the will of the people and "continue to fight for right to work." That's important, since the Koch brothers billions are one of the prime sources bankrolling elected officials around the state who are pushing right to work.

Justin Hill, a Republican state representative from the St. Louis area, started scheming even before the election. "If it (right to work) doesn't pass this August," he said, "we'll pass it in the legislature again next year, and the year after that, and the year after that."

And, Matt Panik of the Missouri Chamber of Commerce was right there with him, "Let's say... voters reject (right to work), that's fine," the legislature can come back in a special



Local 249 members worked hard to defeat right to work. Now anti-worker politicians in Jefferson City are plotting to bring it back. Rob Crismon.

session or early next year and pass right to work again."

The contempt for the people these politicians are supposed to represent is breathtaking. And it means that nothing has yet been settled. Like Bill Murray in "Groundhog Day," working men and women will wake up every day to new threats to impose right to work until we vote its sponsors and supporters out of office.

To break out of his time loop, Bill Murray had to go through transformation. He had to decide what he really

wanted and then he had to change what he was doing to get it. Missouri voters will have to do much the same thing. Unless we want to keep fighting right to work in an endless time loop, we will have to stop voting for the state representatives and senators who ignore the will of the people. We must vote out politicians who are bankrolled by billionaires, and vote in representatives who take Missouri's state motto seriously: "Salus Populi Suprema Lex Esto", which means "Let the welfare of the people be the supreme law."

Continued from previous page

my husband, or other workers 40 hours because they didn't want us to have access to company benefits. And Walmart knew what they were doing. For example, they had a policy: If you worked for 40 hours for six weeks you would become a full-time employee. So they'd work you for 40 hours for five weeks and then drop you back down to part-time hours. That's what not having a union means.

What did it mean for me and my husband to work part-time at \$10 hour? It meant we had to live with our parents. At one time we moved to a Walmart in Georgia and we traded living with my parents for living with Rory's father. We were working for the nation's largest employer, but we were living with our parents. Can you imagine that? And we were not alone. Many of our co-workers lived with their parents and family just like we did. In fact, I have two siblings working there

and living with family members. That's what not have a union means for working families.

The low wages and part-time hours were bad. They were terrible in fact, but it was not the worst part of working at Walmart. Management demanded we perform our job duties in an amount of time that wasn't humanly possible. We were constantly threatened with our jobs and forced to shave off hours. Management would berate people. They could call you names. It was normal for a manager to get in your face and even cuss you out about your performance.

One day a customer asked where something was located. I responded, as I'm supposed to. A manager thought I was socializing. He came up and cussed me out in front of the customer and told me to get to work. The customer was shocked. She thought she got me in trouble and apologized. I wish this had only happened once. That

would be bad enough, but it was a weekly occurrence for myself and my co-workers.

It's hard to convey the emotional toll that being a low wage worker takes on you. Some days you're angry. Some days you're depressed. You don't know how you're going to make it. You don't sleep right. You don't eat right. Some days I would get nauseous the day before I had to work. It would get worse the day of the shift. You don't have a social life because you can't afford to do anything. We'd have to save up for a month for a night at Applebee's. You just exist and even that's hard. You never get to relax. That's what not having a union means.

But how has a union changed our lives?

We went from living in my mom's attic and Rory's father's basement to being homeowners. We bought our first home in April of 2016. In fact, we moved my mother into our home this summer.

That's what having a union means.

We went from being afraid our car would get repossessed to paying off a car and buying a second one. That's what having a union means.

We used to lie in bed when we worked for Walmart and dream about what we have now. We have health-care, vision, and dental benefits. I have job security, personal days, and paid holidays. I have a livable wage and no longer wake up for work sick to my stomach. That's what having a union means.

If I could boil it all down for you: What does it really mean to have a union? I would say it's the freedom to be happy. Now we dream about living and not just surviving. For the first time in our working lives, we are no longer denied the promise of the American dream. Being a part of a union has given us access to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." That's what having a union means.





UAW Local 249 members Jacque Childs, left to right, Chairperson of the Women's Committee and Kim Rowland, Chairperson of the Community Services Committee and member Doug Dawson sort backpacks to be handed out during the annual Apostolic Church of God's East Side Community Day. Photo by Don Lehman.

# Local 249 members donate school supplies

*By Gwen Starkey*

**F**or a second year in a row, UAW Local 249's Community Services Committee participated in the Annual Apostolic Church of God's East Side Community Day, donating backpacks and school supplies to area schoolchildren.

Participation in this event was the brainchild of Jacque Childs, Chairperson of UAW Local 249's Women's Committee. Having been a member of the Apostolic Church of God for over 32 years, her pastor asked her to take charge of getting vendors to come to the event. She instantly involved Kim Rowland and the Community Services Committee thinking people would be interested in finding out about what the UAW does within the community other than just build vehicles.

"I reached out to Kim and we decided to meet with Local 249 President Jason Starr because we thought this was something that the whole UAW should be involved in," Childs said. Starr gave us the green light saying that this is exactly how the UAW needs to be seen out in the community so we got all the committees involved, and it just snowballed from there."

This year they did something a little different that everyone seemed to get onboard with. They included all the other standing committees who had extra funds and each donated \$300

towards the cost of the school supplies. They had pens and pencils embossed with the UAW Local 249 logo on them and made sure that everything they gave away was made in the USA.

The event that took place July 28 collaborated with a variety of local organizations making it the best community day ever. There was food, stage events, face painting, singers, bounce houses, pony rides, DARE officers, American Red Cross health screenings, haircuts, and school supplies donated by UAW Local 249 committees. All of it was free and open to the public.

This year UAW Local 249 decided to include backpacks along with the school supply giveaway and challenged the membership to help support the cause by announcing it on our social media pages and with fliers throughout the plant. One UAW Local 249 member Justin Holt kicked started it by bringing in 10 backpacks. What a great example of compassion and dedication Justin is. Others started showing up with donations and they ended up with a little over 100 back-

packs to give away.

In addition to the backpacks there were over 350 UAW bags filled with school supplies, including folders, pencils, pens, glue, crayons, spiral notebooks, pencil boxes, and rulers. "You could tell that the Community Services Committee put a lot of thought in this," Childs said.

UAW Local 249's Motorcycle Committee chairpersoned by Gary Thomas was an enormous hit. "We showed the kids our motorcycles and they learned about them," Thomas said. The best part, of course, was revving the engine. We are grateful to our great standing committees to allow us to be a small part of such an amazing event."

UAW Local 249 Community Services member Nathan Himes brought his entire family to help out as well. Nathan, who works A-Crew in Truck Trim, joined the committee about a year ago after attending a union meeting where President Jason Starr challenged the membership to get involved. "I spoke with him about joining a committee and he asked my interests and I told him I was involved in my church and community services so he thought this would be a good match for me," Himes said. I like this committee very much." Himes along with wife Kimberly, son Hudson and daughter Emma spent the

day passing out backpacks and school supplies. "As my son is starting kindergarten this year it was very humbling and rewarding to see the smiles on the kids' faces as they received their bags and school supplies just like my son had when we took him shopping for his supplies," Himes said.

"It was awesome, even better than last year," Childs said. "We had great weather, many people attended and everyone was socializing and having a grand time. My pastor said it was a great event and he was so thankful for the UAW coming out to support our community. It's great that people can see that we are not just autoworkers; we're good-hearted people who care about our communities." She and her pastor also wanted to send a special thank you to UAW Local 249's photographer, Don Lehman for photographing the event. "People get busy while working the event," Childs said, and with his photos, we are able to look back and see what a great day it actually was and how our work affects other people. Thank you UAW Local 249 family for making us shine."

Kim Rowland wants everyone to know that the committees could not do what they do without the support of our membership. "It's you guys that make all this possible," Rowland said. Thank you."



# Transit System to revert to a 4x10 schedule

By Jim Fisher

**T**he Truck System will remain on a three crew 4X10 schedule. The Truck System is showing two Super Production Days for A-Crew on September 9th and September 30th. The B-Crew is also showing a Super Production Day for September 15th. There are Super Production Days tentatively scheduled for October as well; however those dates have not been officially posted yet. Last year the company posted multiple Super Production Days for the 4th quarter and pulled them out as demand slowed. We will keep everyone informed as to any changes to the Truck schedule.

The Transit System will revert back to a 4X10 schedule on Monday, September 3rd with both Day Shift and Night Shift working through Thursday's. This has been the case for the past couple of years in the Transit System as they adjust production for the 3rd and 4th quarters of the year. The company has indicated that the Transit System could return back to overtime in late November or December. In addition the Transit System is tentatively scheduled for two down weeks at the end of October. When the company makes any official updates to the schedule we will keep the membership updated.

Sadly on July 28th there was an incident on Ford property that resulted in the death of one of our members. There is an ongoing investigation and no details have been released. I would like to personally thank our Chaplaincy Committee, our ESSP team, and our Emergency Response Team for their professional handling of the situation.

With the attrition that has taken place in our plant the past couple of years the Local has had to reduce the amount of committeeman we are allowed in the plant. The language on this is in Volume 1, Article VI of the Master Agreement. If your area has been affected by this you will be notified by your committeeman.

We have had several complaints to the union hall of members using the union hall parking lot, and walking down 69 highway to avoid the non-ford parking lot. While the number of people doing this is few, it only takes one person slipping and falling to cause an accident. If you are not thinking of your own health and safety, I ask you to think of the person driving the vehicle that might hit you and how it would affect their life.

The company continues to receive complaints of sexual harassment in the plant. The rules are quite simple on this matter. Be respectful of what you're saying to each other and keep your hands to yourself. For years some of these things were considered "shop

talk," but in today's society that does not exist anymore. A violation of the Zero Tolerance Policy is one of the quickest ways to get terminated, and very hard for us to help you get your job back.

The local leadership has raised several issues with the manpower needs at our plant. We have recently had a visit from the International Job Securities Program Department on the matter. We will continue to make this an issue until the fulltime manpower needs at KCAP are resolved.



UAW Local 249 Bargaining Chairman spoke at the August union meeting about overtime that is scheduled for the Truck System. Photo by Don Lehman.

## Yes on Prop. B to raise the wage

By Pat Hayes

**V**oters in Kansas City and St. Louis voted for a long overdue increase in the minimum wage in 2015. Shortly after low-wage workers began to see a small increase in their take home pay, anti-worker state legislators and Gov. Eric Greitens snatched the raise back, passing a preemption bill that undemocratically overrode the will of the voters.

Now, voters in Missouri have a chance to right that wrong. Proposition B, the Minimum Wage Initiative, will be on the Nov. 6 ballot. If approved, it would increase the minimum wage from \$7.85 to \$8.60 next year and increase it in increments to \$12.00 in 2023.

After 2023, the minimum wage would increase or decrease each year based on changes in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers.

If passed, Prop. B would penalize an employer who pays employees less than the minimum wage and require employers to provide underpaid employees with the full amount of the wage rate plus an additional amount equal to twice the unpaid wages.

"No one who works full time should have to live in poverty," say the bill's sponsors, Raise Up Missouri. "Right now, too many Missouri parents who work – often at more than one job – still struggle to put food on the table because they earn just \$300 a week. Join

our fight to raise Missouri's minimum wage so parents – not taxpayers – can provide basics like groceries and rent for the 1 in 5 children in Missouri in low-income families.

According to Raise Up Missouri, the cost of basic necessities – groceries, transportation, housing – has gone up, but the minimum wage has not kept pace. So people living and working in every county of Missouri are falling behind.



Communities across Missouri will benefit from raising the minimum wage, say supporters of Prop. B. Low wage workers will have more to spend and businesses, particularly small businesses, will see increased revenue because low wage workers spend their additional revenue locally.

Although opponents of raising the minimum wage often claim otherwise, history shows that states that have increased their minimum wage, neither the job losses nor the price increases that opponents predicted actually occurred. What did happen is that wage earners at the low end of the scale saw their earnings increase. That's just what raising the minimum wage is intended to do.

Since people who earn minimum wage are most likely to spend their income and spend it with local small businesses for basic necessities like food and clothing, it is estimated by the state of Missouri that state and local government tax revenue could increase by as much as \$214 million dollars, according to Raise Up Missouri.

Additionally, the extra money spent by low-wage workers gets funneled back into the economy helping to create even more growth.



# On Nov. 6 we have a chance to seal the deal

By Jason Starr

**W**orking people won a tremendous victory in August. Against all odds, we defeated right to work. Our victory came as a surprise to many, but not to Local 249 members who worked so hard to make it possible. We knew, from talking to our families, friends and neighbors that right to work was unpopular all across the state. We knew that once the people of Missouri were given a chance to make their voices heard, that right to work was going down in flames.

I want to thank each and every Local 249 member who helped make this victory possible. It's no exaggeration to say that Local 249 members played a key role in the win.

We made many trips to Jefferson City to try to convince legislators not to pass the bill. We turned in thousands of signatures to put repeal on the ballot. And, we made thousands of calls and door to door visits to explain why right to work was wrong for Missouri.

Despite our great victory, the battle is not over. Already, anti-worker politicians, and the right-wing PACs that put millions into their campaigns, are already plotting to reintroduce right to work in a coming session of the legislature.

We don't yet know when they will do it. It could be in a special session or it could be early next year. It's also possible they will wait a while until passions cool and people stop paying attention to the issue.

What we do know is that it's coming if we keep sending the same anti-worker politicians—who work harder for their billionaire bosses than the folks they claim to represent—back to

Jefferson City.

Fortunately, there are some great candidates running who have pledged to work with us to put a stake through the heart of right to work. They have been in the trenches with us from the beginning of this fight.

Martin Rucker, the former Mizzou and professional football player, is running in Senate District 34 in Platte and Buchanan counties. Rucker has been working with Local 249 members on a number of projects. We know him and we trust him to do what is right,

Hillary Shields is running for the 8th Senate District located in Eastern Jackson County. Her district includes portions of Blue Springs, Grain Valley, Greenwood, Independence, Lake Lotawana, Lake Tapawingo, Lee's Summit, Lone Jack, Oak Grove, and Pleasant Hill.

Shields has been an activist in the fight against right to work helping to circulate petitions to put repeal on the ballot.

State Rep. Mark Ellebracht, a longtime friend of Local 249 is running for re-election in our backyard, District 17 in parts of Clay County, including



Local 249 President Jason Starr thanked members for the activism during the battle against right to work at the August membership meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

Liberty, Pleasant Valley, Kansas City, and Claycomo.

Three members of Local 249, Travis Hagewood, Rick Mellon and Terry Richard are running for State Rep. positions this Nov. 6, as well.

UAW CAP has endorsed Matt Sain, Keri Ingle, Mitch Weber, Wes Rogers, Abby Zavos, Deron Magee, and Sunday Van Wagner for State Rep. All are pledged to vote against any effort to re-introduce right to work if elected.

There are two important issues on the Nov. 6 ballot, as well.

If passed, Amendment 1—the Clean Missouri Initiative, will end the

corruption that pervades Missouri politics.

It will ensure that neither political party is given an unfair advantage when new maps are drawn after the next census.

It will also put limits on the influence of lobbyists and dark money PACs.

A yes vote on Proposition B will provide a long overdue increase to the minimum wage in Missouri. That's something the voters in both Kansas City and St. Louis approved in 2015, but was undemocratically overruled by the state legislature.



## NEED HELP?

Are you worried about money? Do you have problems on the job? Is someone in your family ill? Has a loved one passed away? Have you been physically or mentally abused? Are there drug or alcohol problems in your family? Having thoughts of suicide?

The UAW Chaplaincy Committee is here to listen or to offer spiritual advice. Call the Union Hall at 816-454-6333 and the Local will put you in touch with one of our caring Chaplaincy Committee members.



## UAW-Ford Fitness Center

Open Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. (22 hrs.)  
Saturday 10:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Sunday 2:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Located in the Education Bldg.

Call 459-1945 for more information.



# Free flu shots for retirees on Oct.17

By Susan Pena

**We** hope you all are having a great summer and enjoying your retirement. Free flu shots will be available for retirees on Wednesday October 17 before the retiree meeting from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Please make a note that the November retiree meeting will be held on the second Wednesday of the month, Nov. 14 instead of the third due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

Thank you all for voting in the August 7th election. We hope we sent a strong message to all that we do not want right to work here in Missouri.

Local 249 President Jason Starr reports that, despite our great victory in the primary election, some anti-worker politicians are already plotting to reintroduce right to work in the next session of the legislature.

"We need to seal the deal in November," says Starr, "by electing candidates who will put a stop to these attacks on working class families.

"It makes no sense," adds Starr, "to vote against right to work in one election, and vote for politicians who have pledged to pass again in the future.

"We need to send candidates to Jefferson City who understand that the people of Missouri have spoken clearly on right to work," says Starr, anything less shows contempt for the people and democracy.

"We have to ask who these politicians work for, us or their billionaire

funders."

The UAW Local 249 Annual Picnic will be held on Monday September 3, 2018 at LaBenite Riverfront Park in Independence, Mo from 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Bingo is held on the third Friday of the month at 11:00 a.m. at the union hall. Please bring a snack and a white elephant gift.

Please make sure your address, beneficiaries, and life insurance payments are kept up-to-date.

If you have any benefits questions, please call your representatives- Steve Hibbs, Derron Joyner or Jason Hartman at 816-454-6333.

We will meet again at the Retiree Picnic on Wednesday September 19, 2018 at Tryst Falls Park near Excelsior Springs, Mo. Sign in begins at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting starts at 10:30 a.m. Please bring a side dish or dessert and a lawn chair. We'll have lots of door prizes to give away so we hope to see you all there.



UAW Local 249 retirees enjoyed the nice weather and visiting with other members while attending last years annual retiree picnic held at Watkins Mill State Park. Photo by Don Lehman.

## Retiree Picnic

**Tryst Falls Park near Excelsior Springs  
Wednesday, September 19 at 10:00 a.m.**

**The food will be catered by Wabash Barbecue**

*Please bring a side dish or dessert along with a lawn chair and umbrella*



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## Free Retiree Flu Shots

**Wednesday, October 17**

**9-11 am at the Union Hall**





State Senate candidate Martin Rucker plans strategy in the fight against right to work with Local 249 President Jason Starr in the lead up to the August 7 primary election. Rucker is running in Senate District 34 in Platte and Buchanan counties. Photo by Don Lehman.

# Martin Rucker carries RTW fight to senate race

*By Pat Hayes*

**U**nion voters in Platte and Buchanan counties will make an important choice November Nov. 6. They can vote for Martin Rucker, the former Mizzou football player and a key ally of Local 249 in the fight against right to work, or they can vote for Tony Luetkemeyer, a politician who has taken hundreds of thousands of dollars in dark money contributions from political action committees that fund right to work bills in legislatures across the country.

We traveled to Jefferson City to protest right to work and done the hard work to get an initiative on the ballot, not to mention making thousands of calls and door to door visits with voters to decisively defeat right to work in the August Primary election. Now, do Local 249 members really want to vote politicians, like Luetkemeyer, into office, who have shown their contempt for the will of Missouri voters by promising to re-introduce and pass yet another right to work bill in the next session of the legislature?

Martin Rucker hasn't just made promises about right to work and other anti-worker legislation. He's been a leader and active participant in the fight, standing shoulder to shoulder with Local 249 members.

"Right now, hardworking Missourians are under attack," says Rucker. "With legislators in the state capital relentlessly pushing to undermine unions, honest Missouri workers are seeing their pay, safety, and quality of life put at risk, on and off the job. They give these bills catchy names, like 'Right to Work' and

'Paycheck Protection', to mislead trusting voters into checking 'Yes.' In actuality, this legislation is aimed at weakening our wages and our rights as employees.

"As a current member of Laborers Local 663," Rucker adds, "I will stand alongside hardworking Missourians, and take the voice of Missouri's working people to Jefferson City to protect the middle class."

Luetkemeyer, like a lot of Republicans following the decisive defeat of right to work in the August 7 primary election, has gone quiet on the issue, but there's no doubt where he actually stands on issues that affect the working class. He's solidly on the side of the billionaires who fund his campaign.

The Kansas City Star reports that hundreds of thousands in dark money dollars have flooded into the Luetkemeyer campaign through companies owned by GOP consultant Jeff Roe.

Roe was a close ally of disgraced former Gov. Eric Greitens. Roe was also a key fundraiser and organizer of the effort to pass right to work. Roe's company, Vanguard Field Strategies, for example, took more than a million dollars from Freedom to Work to circulate an initiative petition in favor of right to work.

We fought hard to protect our wages, benefits and voice on the job. That hard work paid off when we defeated right to work in Missouri. It was a big victory. Why should we put ourselves in the position of fighting that battle all over again by electing politicians, like Luetkemeyer, who will show their contempt for democracy and the people of our state by re-introducing right to work in the next session of the legislature? Working class men and women can begin to win back some of what we've lost by electing candidates like Martin Rucker.