

# FIRST LOCAL NEWS

Published by United Auto Workers Local 249—Kansas City, Missouri

October 2017

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Brett Bedford and Cynthia Taylor volunteered to help with the Sept. 14 gate collection to aid victims of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria. Members donated more than \$5,300 to the relief effort. Photo by Don Lehman.

International Union United Auto,  
Aerospace and Agricultural Workers Local 249  
8040 NE 69 Highway  
Pleasant Valley, MO 64068



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Members of Local 249's Women's and Motorcycle committees cleaned trash from Highway 69 near the Union Hall and KCAP Sept. 14 to show pride in our area. Photo by Don Lehman.



Local 249 Community Action Program committee member Travis Adams, left, joined with Jason Kander, former Missouri Secretary of State, who is heading up Let America Vote, at the Northland Progress Voting Rights Festival in Parkville Aug. 26. Photo by Don Lehman.



New members were sworn in at the September Membership Meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

## First Local News

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## UAW Local 249

8040 NE 69 Highway  
Pleasant Valley, Mo. 64068  
816-454-6333

## Officers of Local 249

**President** Jason Starr  
**1st Vice President** Tony Renfro  
**2nd Vice President** Tom Carr  
**Recording Secretary** Shirley Mata  
**Financial Secretary** Dana Davidson  
**Treasurer** Chrissy Kline  
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**Sergeant at Arms** Leon Allen  
**Guide** Jeremy Fue  
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**Skilled Trades Bargaining Committee Member** Ron Pangborn  
**Parts Depot Bargaining Chair** Dave Rogers  
**Nurse's Bargaining Chair** Cathy Koogler  
**Team Solutions Bargaining Chair** David Norris  
**Retiree Representative** Larry Rupp

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

### Apprentice Training

Cortez Bradley 816-459-2060

### Benefits

Steve Hibbs, Derron Joyner and Jason Hartman 816-454-6333

### Employee Involvement

Chad Troncin 816-459-1372  
Darroyce Thornton 816-459-1490

### Employee Support Services

Kenny Alexander 816-459-1226

### Health and Safety

Ed Samborski 816-459-1210  
Terry Tharp 816-459-1407  
Ulysses Bales 816-459-1605  
Joe Camper 816-459-5559

### Quality

John Lowe and Jeff Wright 816-459-1232  
Dealer Rep. Danny Mata

## Helpful Numbers

Quality Hotline 1-866-723-3937  
Employee Health Services 816-459-1226  
National Employee Service Center 1-800-248-4444  
Blue Care 816-395-2700  
Blue Cross PPO 1-800-482-5146  
Preferred Care Blue PPO 816-395-3193  
Child Care Referrals 866-327-7952  
UNICARE Life Insurance 1-800-843-8184  
UNICARE Medical/Disability Leave Claims 1-877-475-9652  
Delta Dental (Active) 844-223-8520  
Delta Dental (Retired) 800-524-0149  
United Concordia Dental Plan 1-800-937-6432  
Ford A,X,& Z Plan 1-800-348-7709  
www.fordvehicleprograms.com  
UAW-Ford Legal Services 800-482-7700  
UAW-Ford TESPHE 1-800-248-4444

Visit Local 249 on the web at [www.local249.org](http://www.local249.org)  
Like Local 249 on Facebook [www.facebook.com/local249](http://www.facebook.com/local249)  
Follow us on Twitter @UAWLocal249



# The Picket Line

## Stay informed with UAW text messages

The UAW is using text messaging to keep members informed about important issues and events that are of interest to you. What kinds of things might you get if you sign up for text message alerts from the UAW?

- News about important legislation affecting working people
- Alerts about local and regional events happening near you
- Solicitations to call or sign petitions to make your voice heard
- Information about your polling place come election time

Who can sign up for UAW text alerts? Anyone! That's right, it doesn't matter if you are an active UAW member, one of our UAW retirees, or a UAW supporter—you can sign up to receive text alerts from the UAW.

All you have to do is text "JOIN" to 99795 (Message and data rates may apply) —UAW

## UAW launches BuildBuyUSA campaign

The United Autoworkers announced Sept. 14 the launch of its new BuildBuyUSA campaign. BuildBuyUSA ([www.buildbuyusa.org](http://www.buildbuyusa.org)) promotes the value and importance of a strong manufacturing base to our economic future and the key role consumers can play. By spending our dollars on items made domestically, consumers can encourage a resurgence of well-paying manufacturing jobs in the United States.

"Consumers have the power to make a difference," said UAW International President Dennis Williams. "Our BuildBuyUSA campaign will give people the tools they need to make informed choices so that their spending habits can lead to more good-paying jobs right here in the U.S.A."

"This is a real Made-in-America campaign that will benefit everyday working families – not empty rhetoric coming from Washington, DC. A strong manufacturing base was the foundation of a prosperous America, but we've seen too many of those jobs vanish from our shores," Williams continued. "We need to bring those jobs back."

Through education and advocacy, BuildBuyUSA lays out the importance of Building Here and the impact Buying Here will have on our country. The UAW will be partnering with other labor, progressive, community and religious groups, on its BuildBuyUSA campaign.

The UAW has partnered with Labor 411, the nation's No. 1 guide to union made goods and services, on BuildBuyUSA.

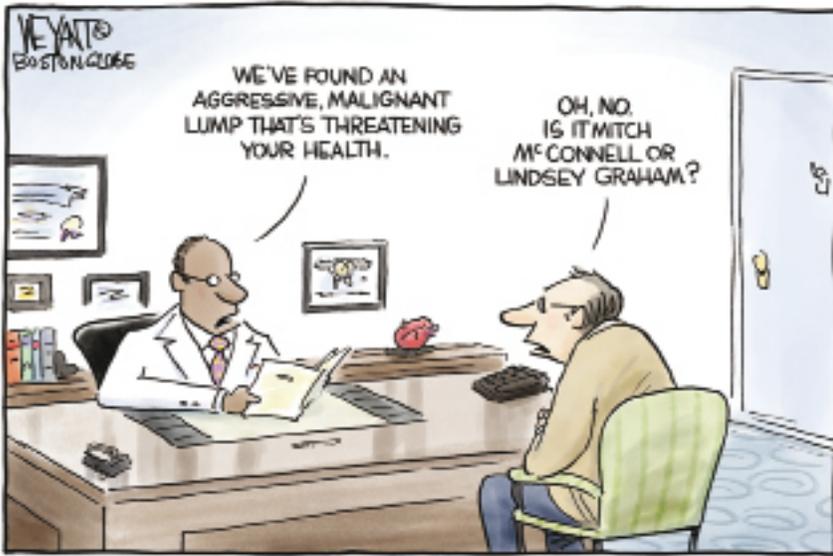
"By buying goods and services from employers that treat their employees with respect through good pay, safe working conditions and good benefits, we strengthen the economy, the middle class and ultimately the country," said Cherri Senders, Labor 411 Founder and President. "We are delighted to be partnering with the UAW to showcase just what kind of impact our spending decisions can have." — UAW

## UAW'S Facebook page is a great resource

Latest studies show that almost half of UAW membership (active and retired) are on Facebook and those figures are growing. Though there are many social media platforms, Facebook is by far the largest and most popular, especially with UAW active and retired members.

The UAW Facebook page features breaking news, educational content as well as union history (that often features stories that could be ripped from today's headlines). It also gives you the tools to keep your elected representatives accountable – reminding them that they work for you and your community.

Much of the content on the page is original and features the voice of UAW members who tell their stories about what being a UAW member means to them. You will see videos about how collective bargaining changed their lives or learn about someone's aha-moment when it clicked for them what solidarity truly means. Ever have a hard time convincing a neighbor or friend about the power of a union? Check out and share our videos to initiate that conversation around real issues, real stories, real lives. — UAW



## NLRB issues complaint against Tesla

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) handed down a complaint Aug. 31 that supports allegations made by Tesla workers in an April unfair labor practice charge that the company violated their rights. The NLRB found merit to allegations by workers that the company had violated their rights by requiring them to sign an overly-broad confidentiality agreement that could bar them from talking about their working conditions and safety issues at the facility. The company was also charged with numerous acts of intimidating and harassing workers and otherwise violating workers' rights under federal labor law.

In recent months, workers have raised concerns about health and safety, compensation, and their right to speak out. This is despite signing a document indicating they may face termination or criminal prosecution for speaking publicly, or to the media, about what they observed at work or their working conditions.

Last May, Worksafe, a California non-profit organization that specializes in workplace health and safety issues, released a report on Tesla's Health and Safety Record.

"Over the past several months," according to Worksafe, "workers at Tesla have become increasingly aware of the potential safety hazards at the company's flagship vehicle plant in Fremont, California."

Worksafe found that Tesla's total recordable incidence rate in 2015 was 31 percent higher than the industry-wide incident rate, and that the rate of serious injuries at Tesla's Fremont plant was approximately double the industry rate for 2015.

Despite Tesla's claims that injury rates are improved in 2017, the report found that Tesla's injury logs also show that a significant number of cases are not recorded at the time of injury, making any mid-year attempt to evaluate injury rates premature.

After workers notified elected officials and community groups about the confidentiality policy, five California Assembly members sent

a letter to the company asking them to clarify the agreement. More than 50 community groups also sent a letter on behalf of workers to Tesla CEO Elon Musk urging him to revise the company's policy so not to infringe on workers' rights.

"I knew the company couldn't legally prevent us from speaking out about issues at the plant, but the confidentiality policy confused a lot of my coworkers and made them fear that they didn't have certain rights. This NLRB Complaint will help people realize they have the right to speak up when they see something that isn't right," said David Gonzalez, a Production Associate. "I'm proud of my coworkers who filed these charges and stood up for us."

"For as long as I've been at Tesla, it's been clear to me that it's up to the workers to make sure that we're safe and treated fairly," said Jonathan Galescu, a Tesla Production Associate. "I joined others in filing the charges for myself, but I also did it for my coworkers – they need to know we have rights, and that we can speak up about what we are seeing and experiencing. I want to thank the NLRB for hearing us and the UAW for having our backs as we continue our fight to address the issues on the shop floor and form our union."

Learn more about the fight for a fair future at Tesla at [www.FairFuture-AtTesla.org](http://www.FairFuture-AtTesla.org).



Representative Emmanuel Cleaver spoke at the Stand Up KC rally Sept. 4, comparing the group's fight for a higher minimum wage to a boxing match. Using metaphors and stories of Muhammad Ali, Cleaver urged the crowd to keep fighting another round saying more supporters are in their corner. Photo by Don Lehman.

## 249 rallies with fast food workers

*By Colleen Taylor*

**Several hundred Kansas City area fast-food workers, labor unions, clergy and their supporters, started Labor Day with a rally at 33rd and Southwest Trafficway, stressing their demand for \$15 an hour and union rights. Local 249 members and 50 elected officials including U.S. Rep Emmanuel Cleaver joined workers in the streets that day, to help emphasize that America needs stronger unions if the economy is to work for everyone and not just the few at the top. The rally was organized by Stand Up KC/Fight for 15.**

Carrying American flags and signs, the members of the crowd marched toward Linwood and Main. Demonstrators stopped and chanted for several minutes in front of McDonald's on Main, then marched south to the Burger King near Armor Boulevard.

Representative Emmanuel Cleaver spoke to the crowd and compared the group's fight for a higher minimum wage to a boxing match. Using metaphors and stories of Muhammad Ali, Cleaver urged the crowd to keep fighting another round and said more and more supporters are in their corner.

"I feel strongly about this, I have a lot of passion about it because this is something that will transform our community and it will raise the standard of

living for everyone," Cleaver argued.

The Stand Up/Fight for 15 group started with fast food workers coming together and fighting to demand \$15 an hour and a union. Workers aren't only pushing for a pay increase. For these workers, it's about more than money. They want a union in order to fix the economic and political systems in the U.S. that are rigged to benefit big corporations over working people. A union would give fast food workers a voice at their jobs. "It would help the little people have a better life. Someone to have their back". It would help them get health care, retirement benefits, sick days and the basic needs that many don't have now.

Today, 48,000 Kansas Citians are

employed in some of the world's largest and most profitable fast food and retail corporations. But they work in our city's worst paying jobs. The average fast food worker is now 28 years old and the average retail worker is 38. Both make about \$7.35/hour, have no healthcare, no paid sick days or vacation pay, and face daily discrimination. Top brands like McDonald's make \$5.4 billion in profit, pays their CEO \$14 million, and has over 500 locations city-wide. It would take the average retail worker 823 years to earn what Walgreens CEO Greg Wasson earns in a year. This is why Stand Up KC, the fast food and retail workers from across KC are coming together to demand a union, good wages and a voice for low-wage workers.

This summer nearly 70 percent of Kansas City residents voted to enact a \$15 minimum wage over the course of several years. But by later in the summer, Gov. Greatens signed a new state law preventing cities from setting their own minimum wage. The state law prohibiting the city to carry out that plan went into effect August 28, a week before the Labor Day rally.

The legislature's obstruction of the voters' decision has only strengthened workers' demand for a union. With a union, workers say, no politician could take their raises away. Workers also promise an intensive voter engagement campaign that will oust anti-worker politicians.

"The majority of Kansas Citians are on board for increasing the minimum wage and it's important for us on this Labor Day to highlight our need for a union as well," said Terrance Wise, a McDonald's worker. "With a union, we'd have a voice on the job, the ability to have collective bargaining, demand more and win more from our employer," said Wise, who is a part of Stand Up KC.

Every worker in this nation deserves the right to have a voice on the job.

This is why fast food and retail workers have banded together to fight for \$15 and a union. With a union, their voices will be stronger. With organization, they can win better working conditions, and elect politicians who will for fight them and not against them, politicians who will support a \$15/hour minimum wage, union rights, universal health care, and immigration reform.

# Challenge Mfg. strike: Peril on the picket line

By Gwen Starkey

**S**olidarity, he was just showing his unity with the brothers and sisters of UAW Local 710 striking Challenge Manufacturing on a cold February afternoon when the next thing he knew, he was suddenly hit, thrust atop the hood of a vehicle from seemingly nowhere. It's no secret, the unionism of Gary Thomas, he wears it on his sleeve and this day was no different.

"I had been there every day up to that point so I was pretty well known within the management of Challenge Mfg., and the people who were on the picket line. I'm not very quiet about my unionism. I am very vocal and in your face for the most part especially with the scabs, strikebreakers and security. They were on their shift change when I showed up and someone in salary ran a stop sign and put me on the hood of his car," Thomas, a 3-year UAW Local 249 member who is an MP & L checker receiver on C-Crew, relates. I wasn't even there for 10 minutes. I was on public property crossing the driveway to the other side of the public sidewalk when the manager just hit me with his car."

What happened a few weeks later is the real kicker. Gary is of a mindset that what happens on the picket line stays on the picket line. Unfortunately for him, the driver of the vehicle thought differently. "I didn't file a police report when he hit me," Gary said. I am under the firm belief and this is my personal belief, that what happens on the picket line stays on the picket line while we are fighting for people to have better rights. I wasn't hurt. Of course, it hurt at the time, but nothing lasting. Hell, I'm an autoworker, we know pain.

"The people inside the building will soon become our brothers and sisters again once the strike is resolved, so I didn't take it past what happened on the picket line. The driver who hit me didn't feel the same way. He felt that since he hit me and that I damaged his vehicle that I owed him and he worded the ticket that made it look like I damaged his property on purpose." A ticket that Thomas received in the mail several weeks later as the police never showed up while he was on the picket line.

So what was Gary Thomas' call to action? Why did he decide to get involved? "I saw the call from our union on the UAW Local 249 social media Facebook page," he says, and they asked for volunteers to show up and help bolster the numbers of the strikers and show solidarity. When I got there I immediately noticed first, that it was predominately immigrants that were striking, and second, that they were

women. I heard the story that this was the reason that they were still striking at this Challenge plant was because they were mostly women. All the other challenge locations bargained in good faith except this location."

"Anyone who knows their union history knows that one of the best forces for unionism was women and immigrants," Gary said. And me being a unionist, I had to be there to support them. Of the 19 days they were on strike, I was there for 17 of them, before work, after work, on my days off, almost every single day with the exception of the day of the union meeting and the day after I got hit."

Gary is the epitome of what being a dedicated union member is all about. Recently returning from a week in Oklahoma representing UAW Local 249 at union summer school he relates that being surrounded by so many hardworking passionate people who not only care about their union, but for the freedom and voice of wage earners everywhere fills him with resolve. He says that this experience has reassured him that all the time and dedication he has put into supporting the UAW and region 5 is exactly where God intended him to be. This is the kind of union member we want on our team.

Gary, an avid motorcyclist, got together a few other members of UAW Local 249 and formed the Local's first Motorcycle Committee. This close knit band of brothers have already shown that they are a force to be reckoned with in helping make a positive change in our community. Whether it's helping our ramp crew building decks, rallying against the right to work legislation, standing in solidarity with Stand up KC, visiting assisted living facilities, or just simple maintenance at a local elementary school, these are the go to guys.

And, what about that ticket that he received? He was represented by our friend in labor, attorney and Representative of the 17th District Mark Ellebracht. The case, which had been postponed numerous times was just recently resolved. Thomas received two years' probation. He just takes it all in stride, union to the bone.



UAW Local 249 members including Gary Thomas, right, teamed up with Local 710 to show solidarity on the Challenge picket line last February.

After a three-week strike, Challenge Mfg., which makes engineering metal products for GM, reached their first tentative agreement. Striking issues were about pay, benefits and working conditions.

"We congratulate UAW members of Local 710 at Challenge Manufacturing on their first contract after difficult negotiations," said UAW President Dennis Williams.

"We welcome Challenge Manufacturing members into the Region 5 UAW family. The solidarity they demonstrated led to significant economic gains and workplace protections," said Gary Jones, director of UAW Region 5. "I would like to thank UAW Local 31 and UAW Local 249 along with the many friends and family of UAW Local 710 who aided members on the picket line."

## In Memoriam

Ryan Richard Burres, 22, a member of UAW Local 249 and a resident of Pleasant Valley died suddenly Saturday, September 2, 2017. He was born on Sept. 8, 1994 to Vickie Lloyd and the late Brion Burres.



UAW Local 249 members of the CAP, Recreation, Education, Wheelchair Ramp Crew, and Motorcycle Committees teamed up to help a senior citizen, who was recently disabled and forced to leave her job, by building her a new deck and landscaping her yard.

# Hometown Heroes: People helping people

By Gwen Starkey

**A**mericans need heroes, men and women who by their incredible acts of courage and kindness inspire us to follow in their example. Heroes don't always look the part. Most aren't wearing a cape or mask, and don't have an army behind them, but they're champions all the same. In the aftermath of Harvey and Irma, two of the worst hurricanes to hit Texas and Florida in American history, heroes emerged helping out neighbors and strangers alike. "When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, look for the helpers," Fred Rogers, beloved host of Mr. Rogers Neighborhood, said. You will always find people who are helping."

Helping is the backbone of UAW Local 249. Its membership and committees are always at the ready to lend a hand or donate when the need arises. The need struck with a vengeance last month when back to back hurricanes hit the southern United States. Harvey hit the Texas Gulf coast area with devastating winds, flooding and record rainfall, and a week later Irma struck Puerto Rico and the Florida Keys leveling everything in sight.

UAW Local 249 coordinated with Region 5 to channel their collective resources through UAW Locals in Texas. UAW Local 249 Community Services Committee organized a donation drive for disaster relief items and delivered

them to area locals in Houston to be distributed to those in need. "Thank you for your dedicated commitment to serve those that have been impacted by the tragic destruction of hurricane Harvey," Jason Starr President of UAW Local 249 said. The membership took a gate collection and raised over \$5300 that was also donated to the victims of the recent hurricanes.

It's not just the big events that garner UAW Local 249's attention, our hometown heroes are kept quite busy in our own neighborhoods as well. The Community Services Committee, chaired by Kim Rowland, conducted a clothing, furniture and small appliance drive to help raise funds for the different charities that they support

throughout the year. "There was such a big response," Kim said, that we ended up having to rent a storage facility in Claycomo, and it is already nearly full." They hope to raise \$1000.

Every year at Christmas time, the Community Services Committee sets up a Hope Tree. This year they are collaborating with Cornerstones of Care who believe safe children and healthy families create strong communities. "This year we decided to partner with Cornerstones of Care," Kim Rowland said. This is a group that member Misty Kirwan got us involved in that takes care of foster kids, whether they are in foster homes or group homes. This great organization provides for the kids, whether it's a birthday gift or if they are graduating, and need a cap and gown or school pictures, athletic equipment, or just anything that they might need. What we are going to focus on is helping the foster kids at Christmas time this year. "This is where some of the money raised from the clothing drive will be used. They are also getting ready for their annual coats for kids drive, which is always a smashing success.

The Ramp Crew is keeping very busy as well. They teamed up with members of the CAP, Recreation, Education, and Motorcycle Committees and together have taken a senior citizen who was recently disabled and forced to leave her job under their wing. They've mowed her lawn and have done a little bit of this and that when they noticed that her deck was falling into disrepair as well.

"She lives on a fixed income and eats lunch at the senior center so she can make ends meet," Kim Rowland said. She had a big deck on the front of her home that was in pretty poor condition and they called and asked if the Ramp Crew wanted to get involved in repairing it. I went over there and met them one day and they thought it just needed some repairs, but unfortunately, it was worse than that. It needed to be completely torn out. It was horrible. It wasn't even safe to walk on anymore."

"The Motorcycle Crew agreed to do all the demolition on the deck and get it all ready for the Ramp Crew," Kim said, and together we worked to replace the deck. "The Motorcycle Com-



Helping is the backbone of UAW Local 249. Its membership and committees are always at the ready to lend a hand or donate when the need arises. Members recently helped with a gate collection for hurricane victims and rebuilt a deck for a senior citizen.

mittee also did some landscaping so it would be pretty for her. They are using the money collected from member Chris Scott's memorial gate collection. Chris, who recently passed away from a tragic motorcycle accident, family suggested that instead of flowers for his memorial that everything be donated to the Motorcycle Committee. They decided to use some of the money from Chris's memorial fund to buy some landscaping supplies and make a memorial garden for him there. It's exactly what he would have wanted, members say.

A 92-year-old WWII Veteran and

GM retiree Richard Givens, who was in desperate need of a wheelchair ramp, recently contacted the Ramp Crew about installing a new ramp at his home. His caregiver was having a difficult time maneuvering him in and out of his house. The crew arrived to assess the situation only to find out that his driveway was in such bad shape, they couldn't even get their truck and trailer up the drive without damaging it.

"We called around and tried to work with different veterans organizations that could supply some heavy equipment to get it leveled out so we could at least get some gravel in there

to get the guys in and out," Kim Rowland said. We weren't getting anywhere with that, so I talked to former UAW Local 249 President Jeff Wright and Bargaining Committeeman Travis Ramsey and they both offered to volunteer their time to go up with some bobcats and get everything smoothed out."

The Ramp Crew worked with them that day helping dig some rough spots out of the driveway. They ordered three loads of gravel and got the driveway back in good enough shape where Mr. Givens could come and go as needed. The driver for the gravel company, Larry McFee, realized what was going on and

donated one load of gravel free. Mr. McFee's kindness and generosity saved the team over \$300. Hometown heroes come from all walks of life, all you have to do is look for the people helping.

"They got the driveway fixed and the next day, the ramp crew built the ramp and now Mr. Givens can safely get out of his home and be able to leave the property without tearing up a bunch of vehicles," Kim said. That was a pretty cool deal."

We are grateful for our hometown heroes, for all that you do. Our community is a much better place because of people like you.

# Halloween Party

For kids ages 12 and under

A free and safe alternative to trick or treat

Tuesday, October 31, 2017

6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

UAW Local 249 Union Hall (basement)

8040 NE 69 Hwy - Pleasant Valley

(across from the Ford plant)

Featuring haunted castle, costume contests, face painting, magic show, prizes and games, pop, hot dogs, cookies, snow cones and cotton candy

Sponsored by the UAW Local 249 Women's Committee



UAW President Dennis Williams wants to see more advanced factories building materials for the tech-heavy products of the future. All advocates for the Made in America agenda acknowledge that it is labor unions that made these jobs worth fighting for.

# We need to create more manufacturing jobs

By Dennis Williams

**S**ince 2012, National Manufacturing Day is observed on the first Friday in October to boost interest in manufacturing jobs. American companies pushed for the day because they said it was too difficult to attract workers. Matching skills and interest to jobs is important, but the real reason to have a national day on manufacturing is to focus on creating more manufacturing jobs. These are the jobs that created a middle-class who supported their families with good wages and benefits — even without a college degree.

That we have this day at all shows how dire the manufacturing situation in the U.S. has become. We've lost over five million manufacturing jobs since 2000, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Some were lost to efficiency, but many went offshore when manufacturers decided it was more profitable to pursue cheaper labor in countries with fewer regulations. After

20 years of racing to the bottom, some U.S. manufacturers now realize the need to reinvest in and acknowledge the role American manufacturing has played in building this country, the middle-class and our communities.

And what kind of jobs do we want brought back? First, the manufacturer won't get a free pass just because their label says "Made in the USA." If a com-

pany is bad to workers, the environment and the community, should we be rewarding it by purchasing its products?

In 2016, the U.S. Department of Labor found workers in California making clothes for retailers like Forever 21 and TJ Maxx were paid as little as \$4 an hour. Fuyao, one of China's largest automotive glass companies, moved their production to the U.S. to save on labor costs, but then promptly created unsafe working conditions by refusing to provide its workers with breathing equipment, even as they begged for them. To this day, Fuyao fights the workers' quest for a safe workplace at every turn. Wisconsin is using \$3 billion in taxpayer money to lure Foxconn to open a plant there. Reports show that

it will take 25 years or more before taxpayers will see a return on this investment.

This is why we are partnering with Labor411 to launch BuildBuyUSA. We need to push our leaders to create a real industrial policy that builds the middle-class and urges consumers to think about the hidden costs of low-priced imported goods. It's about our future and the big picture of bringing back the well-paying and sustainable manufacturing jobs that supported all of us for generations.

Promoters of National Manufacturing Day say that "today's manufacturing is not your grandfather's manufacturing." That may be true, but there is nothing like wanting future manufacturing jobs to provide the same opportunities that our grandparents had.

This is my last year as UAW president and what I want between now and the next National Manufacturing Day are fewer companies who show no respect for worker rights, yet tout the "Made in the USA" label. I want to see more advanced factories building materials for the tech-heavy products of the future. And I want all advocates for the Made in America agenda to acknowledge that it is labor unions who made these jobs worth fighting for.

This Op-Ed first appeared in the Detroit News Labor Voices column.

## My experience in Black Lake was amazing!

Although it wasn't my first time, that was in 2005 when I worked for the UAW Ford Child Development and Learning Center where I was an assistant preschool teacher, which afforded me an opportunity to go to Black Lake to learn all about the union.

This time was different; being a newly appointed member of Local 249 Civil and Human Rights Committee, I got to learn all about diversity and inclusion a skill-set that can and will be implemented in many different aspects of my work and social life. I was taught as a child by my parents to be respectful of other cultures. My family has always lived in communities where we went to school with people of different nationalities, cultures and religions.

What I learned at the Walter and May Reuther Education Center in Black Lake will help me as a leader and as a member of the Civil and Human Rights Committee to continue our fight for social and economic justice for all, and understanding diversity and inclusion in our union, workplace, community, and society as a whole.

I would like to thank our membership and leadership of Local 249 and our regional and International staff for a wonderful and educational experience. — Jackie Cleaves

# Unemployment Reps coming for Transit layoff

By Todd Hillyard

**T**he Truck system is currently scheduled for the following overtime days, A-Crew Oct. 8, Nov.5, and Dec. 3; B-Crew Oct 21, Nov. 18, and Dec. 16; and C-Crew a voluntary Holiday Nov. 11. These dates are tentative and subject to change. If the company changes the schedule we will inform the membership at that time.

The Transit system is currently scheduled to be on layoff the week of Oct.9. The down week is subject to change up until Thursday the week prior to the layoff. Do not make plans until you are notified by the company you will be on layoff. If the down time holds true, unemployment filing information will be sent out a few days prior to the layoff. It will also be put on the Local 249 app and Facebook page.

We plan on having two state employees at the Union Hall for three days after the down week to help with members having unemployment issues. It took weeks to correct the pay after the last layoff so we met with the state unemployment office and are in the final stages of setting up space for them at the Union Hall.

We have been informed there are approximately 1000 members who signed up to get the \$300 or \$100 clothing voucher through Arrow Uniform negotiated in the 2017 Local Contract. Members have until the end of the 2017 calendar year to redeem their merchandise. If you have questions about how to redeem your clothing you can ask your committeeperson or a member of the Bargaining Committee. You had to sign up during the sign up period in 2015 to be eligible for the voucher.

The UAW/Ford second Annual Charity golf outing is October 7 and

Paradise Pointe in Smithville again this year. All proceeds will go to the VCP (Veterans Community Project) in Kansas City to help provide tiny homes for local Veterans in need. There are limited spots so if you plan on playing please come to the Union Hall to pay and fill out your team forms. Our members who attended last year had a great time and we raised over \$40,000 for local Veterans in need.

We have been told by many team leaders in the plant they are being told not to put safety issues in GPA. If you have a safety concern and your process coach or superintendent cannot have it resolved by the end of your shift it needs to be put in GPA so it can be tracked to closure. The last thing we want is someone to get hurt when we know an issue exists and nothing is done to correct it. If you are told not to put a safety concern in GPA please call your committeeperson or the bargaining committee so we can elevate the issue and correct it.

Our President, Jason Starr, along with his standing committees and many volunteers from the plant recently completed collecting signatures for a citizen's veto of the Right-to-Work bill that was passed in Missouri. Along with almost every labor organization in the state, Jason and many volunteers delivered over 300,000 signatures to the capitol building in Jefferson City.



UAW Local 249 Bargaining Chair Todd Hillyard reminded members that those who signed up for clothing vouchers through Arrow have until the end of the 2017 calendar year to redeem their merchandise. Photo by Don Lehman.

Right-to-Work that was supposed to go into effect in August is now on hold until it goes on the ballot for citizens to vote on in November of 2018. This is the first time in the history of Missouri that a citizen's veto has been successful and over rode the law that our elected officials passed in legislative sessions.

Between now and next November there will be a lot of work to defeat right to work on the ballot. Outside

corporate interests have pledged millions to make sure right to work becomes law. Eric Greitens and many Republicans in our state continue to spread lies about right to work in our communities. Right to work does nothing but lower the standard of living for everyone and is nothing more than a way to financially cripple labor unions and their ability to collectively bargain for their members.



Kids had a great time at the UAW picnic. Photo by Don Lehman.



Members enjoy great food at the UAW picnic. Photo by Don Lehman.

# Local 249 members aid Hurricane Harvey, Irma and Maria victims

By Jason Starr

**T**hank you to all our members who have reached out to express their concern and desire to help those affected by the destruction of hurricane's Harvey in Texas and Irma in Florida and Maria in Puerto Rico.

The local leadership has worked with UAW Region 5 to coordinate our efforts to channel our resources through UAW locals in the state of Texas and Florida. During a recent gate collections members donated over \$5300 for the hurricane relief fund.

Members who would like to make a financial contribution, we are asking that donations be made to the Texas Workers Relief Fund administered by the Texas state AFL-CIO. Cash and checks with the notation hurricane relief can be dropped off at our local union hall. Members interested in helping Puerto Rico can contact the Puerto Rican Society of Greater Kansas City's Facebook page for more information.

Disaster management in the state of Texas, Florida and US territory of Puerto Rico were asking for non-perishable food items. I'd like to thank The Community Services Committee who organized a donation drive of disaster relief items. Those items donated by members were delivered to the Harvester Community Food Network.

The Community Services Committee will be having their annual Turkey Drive gate collection to buy turkeys

for those in need this Thanksgiving. We hope to bring enjoyment of our traditional holiday season to those who need a helping hand.

The Community Services Committee is also working with the Cornerstones of Care, a group that helps foster children. Cornerstones of Care will be the beneficiary of the Hope Christmas tree and Coats for Kids this year. Purchasing from concessions at union meetings help fund this great cause.

The Women's Committee working with Community Services will be selling Breast Cancer Awareness T-shirts and a team will be walking in the Making Strides of Kansas City Breast Cancer Awareness walk at Crown Center on Oct. 28. All funds raised selling T-shirts will benefit the Hope Christmas tree.

The Newly formed Motorcycle Committee headed by Gary Thomas has become very active. They recently helped rebuild a deck for an area senior citizen and built a memorial garden for the Great Plains SPCA.

During vacation shut down, members of the Motorcycle, Education, Civil Rights committees visited Cedars of Liberty. The assisted living



UAW President Jason Starr thanked the membership for everyone who reached out to help with the recent rash of hurricanes that struck the Southern States. Photo by Don Lehman.

facility held an impromptu bike show and several pingpong, card and board game matches. While there, they talked about the trials and tribulations of labor and how every person matters.

We're very active in our community and I would like to encourage everyone to become involved in your

union. If you would like more information about our standing committees and what they do, please stop by the union hall.

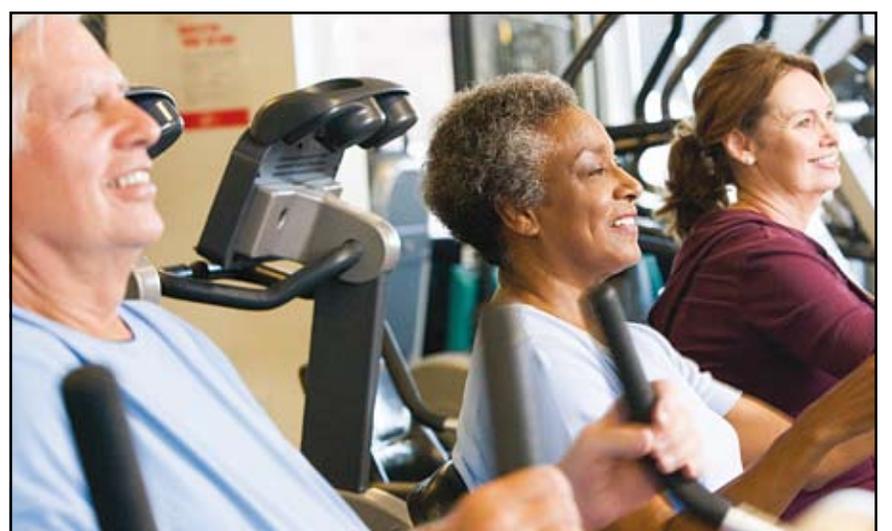
I would like to thank all our standing committees. These are the contribution that our UAW members do to make our communities better for all.



## 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.



The Annual Retiree Picnic was held at Watkins Mill on Sept. 9 where 125 members were served a wonderful barbecue dinner from Wabash BBQ in Excelsior Springs. Photo by Don Lehman.

# Annual Retiree Picnic held at Watkins Mill

By Susan Pena

**T**hank you to the UAW Local 249 for sponsoring a great active and retiree member's picnic. The Annual Retiree Picnic was held at Watkins Mill on Sept 9 where 125 members were served a wonderful barbecue dinner from Wabash BBQ in Excelsior Springs, Mo. On Sept 24, the annual Local 249 picnic in LaBenite Riverfront Park in Sugar Creek was held and over 3000 members were served a wonderful meal of grilled hamburgers and hot dogs, prepared right there in the park.

There were carnival rides, yard games and 14 bounce houses for all to enjoy. The temperatures were in the 90's on both days, but there was lots of

shelter, shade and cool drinks. There was lots of food and we had all day to renew acquaintances.

The retirees met at the Watkins Woolen Mill State Park in Clay County. One retiree came all the way from Gulf Shores, Alabama. There were members who've been retired from two months to 30 years.

Oh, the stories we could tell. Hundreds of dollars' worth of gift certificates to restaurants, gas stations and hardware stores were given away along with UAW Local 249 T-shirts, hats, and watches. Local 249 donated many of the prizes and bought our lunch. Thank you so much to the active members. The Wabash BBQ was wonderful.

We thank all the members who helped make this year's picnic a great success. Mel Thompson put out the signs that got us to our destination. He started a day early loading coolers and getting ice and drinks ready. Jean Thompson spent the day in her car shuttling members to and from the

parking lot.

Bob Thomas scouted out the park and made the reservations for the shelter house. He brought and set up a tent for additional shade. Tracy, as always, was busy the entire time making sure we were taken care of. She spent most of the day setting up, cutting desserts and tearing down afterwards.

Glen and Mary Sanders purchased the gift cards and brought the prizes, tables, microphone equipment, and replenished drinks.

Thank you to Gerald, Larry, Eldon, Bill, Ernie, Dave, Shirley, Anita and anyone else who helped to make it a great day. The true meaning of brotherhood is always evident when we get together. Thanks to all who came out to enjoy the food, fun and fellowship.

Bingo will be held on the third Friday of the month at 11:30 a.m. Please bring a snack and a white elephant gift.

Our next meeting will be October 18, 2017 at 10:30 a.m. at the UAW Hall. Please bring a dessert or a covered dish. We hope to see you all there.

  
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**Like us on Facebook**  
[www.facebook.com/UAWLocal249](http://www.facebook.com/UAWLocal249)

Attention Local 249 Retirees  
**Free Flu Shots**  
 October 18 from 9 am to 11 am  
 at the Union Hall



Members of the Emergency Response Team at the Kansas City Assembly Plant use the Powerhouse to train for confined space rescue during annual refresher training Sept. 13. Team members are all volunteers who respond to emergencies at the plant. Photo by Don Lehman.

# Kansas City ERTs hone first responder skills

By Pat Hayes

**A** group of Emergency Response Team members at KCAP honed their first responder skills during annual refresher training during the week of Sept. 11. Every year, approximately 50 UAW members who volunteer to serve on the plant Emergency Response Team are required to undergo refresher training to ensure they are able to respond to emergencies at our facility in a safe and effective manner.

According to UAW Local 249 ERT Coordinator Keith Jones, each ERT receives 56 hours of annual training in First Aid, Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Automatic External Defibrillator (AED), Blood Borne Pathogens, Incipient Fire Fighting, HAZMAT Operations, Incident Command, Confined Space Rescue and High Angle Rescue.

Each week, ERTs at KCAP respond to a number of medical emergencies

on all shifts and in all departments at the plant. They can also be called on to put out fires, perform standbys when employees enter confined spaces to work or control emergency releases of hazardous materials.

The hands-on medical training that ERTs receive has saved a number of lives here at KCAP and at other Ford facilities in the U.S., Canada and Mexico in recent years. In addition, the fire-fighting and hazardous mate-

rial response work that ERTs perform insures that Ford plants remain open, productive and continue to provide good paying jobs for UAW members.

ERT training is conducted by a Michigan-based non-profit organization, Emergency Response Solutions International. The training is, for the most part, hands-on using real world scenarios to prepare ERTs, who spend most of their time working regular jobs in skilled trades or diving a fork lift, to respond effectively to plant emergencies. ERSI instructors are highly skilled professionals with years of experience as firefighters and paramedics.

ERSI instructors, who provide emergency response training to all Ford facilities in North America, praise Kansas City's team highly as one of the

best trained and highly motivated in the nation.

In past ERT Challenge competitions between emergency responders from Ford plants across the nation, Kansas City's Emergency Response Team has won many first place prizes in a number of events as well as the overall prize for best team.

The training and equipment available to KCAP's emergency response team rivals that of many big city fire departments and is the envy of many smaller rural departments. ERTs are trained to operate the plant fire trucks, emergency response vehicles and machine rescue equipment. Equipment on the vehicles is designed to respond to every conceivable type of emergency that could occur in the plant.