

# FIRST LOCAL NEWS

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

May 2017



**Worker's  
Memorial  
Day | p8**

**TPTs to convert  
to short term  
supplementals | p9**

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



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Local 249 ERT Shelli Davis, an electrician at KCAP, puts out a fire with a CO2 fire extinguisher during annual refresher training April 7. Team members also get first aid, HAZMAT, confined space and high angle rescue training each year. Photo by Don Lehman.



Laprett Rollins, left, and Local 249 President Eric Hall accept a First Place Award for Local 249's float in the Kansas City St. Patrick's Day Parade. Photo by Don Lehman.



Local 249's Civil and Human Rights Committee sold T-Shirts at the April Membership Meeting celebrating Native, Hispanic and Mexican Heritage. Photo by Don Lehman.



Local 249 Apprenticeship Rep. Cortez Bradley spoke at the April Membership Meeting about the newest group of apprentices coming on line at KCAP. Photo by Don Lehman.

## First Local News

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## UAW 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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### Employee Support Services

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**Employee Health Services** 816-459-1226

**National Employee Service Center** 1-800-248-4444

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[www.fordvehicleprograms.com](http://www.fordvehicleprograms.com)

**UAW-Ford Legal Services** 800-482-7700

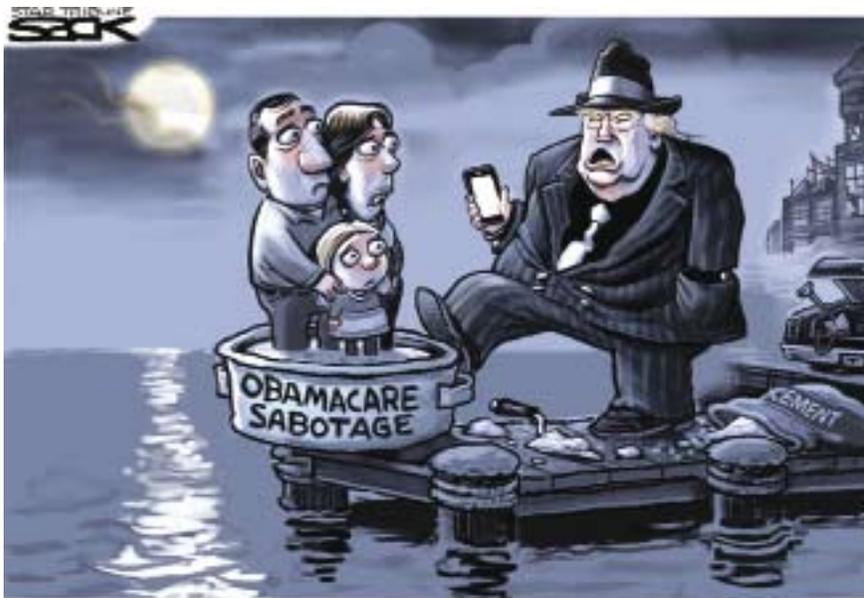
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ANY MINUTE THE DEMS WILL CALL AND BEG ME TO NEGOTIATE. WHO KNEW HEALTH CARE EXTORTION COULD BE SO COMPLICATED!

## It's all about fun for special kids at Black Lake

**Y**ou could be excused if you mistakenly thought a catastrophe had hit the UAW Walter and May Reuther Family Education Center in northern Michigan on one Friday night in late February.

The fire truck parade is a time-honored tradition of the Burn Camp as the participants look forward to their ride around the education center.

After all, all manner of emergency equipment was gathered on the Black Lake property, from fire engines and other firefighting equipment to ambulances and police vehicles. There was a police dog and handler on the grounds and the sounds of static-filled chatter from two-way radios seemed to indicate something bad was happening. Emergency workers were leading children from the guest rooms to waiting vehicles as red and blue lights danced off the buildings at the center and in the snow.

However, the children were smiling. And laughing. And goofing around and doing what kids do. And those smiles are what keeps the Great Lakes Burn Camp for Burn-Injured Children going. The burn camp is a twice-annual event for Michigan burn survivors who get to spend four days among their peers who face the same challenges. Some of these come in the form of impolite stares at their injuries from strangers; others are the many reconstructive surgeries many of the burn survivors undergo. In some cases, they are the only student who is a burn survivor in their entire school system.

"It's actually therapy for the kids," said Mike Longenecker, camp director and a retired Jackson, Michigan, firefighter. "It's huge for their social well-being and their self-esteem."

But Longenecker is quick to point out that the camp isn't about injuries or the tragedies that caused them – it's

about fun. This is the fourth year the winter camp has been held at Black Lake.

"They love it here," Longenecker said as the 40 campers enjoyed a spaghetti dinner in the Black Lake dining hall. "This place is special to them."

Isaiah Struck, 10, of Bay City, Michigan, Alonzo More, 14, and Jaques Williams, 15, both of Detroit, all agreed that the Olympic-sized swimming pool is a top attraction. But more than being able to swim in the winter, the camp is about hanging out with friends and not be self-conscious about their appearance.

Amber and Ian Burkhart met at the camp and fell in love. Now married, they return to help out as counselors.

"The best thing about the burn camp is you don't get made fun of," Struck said before participating in a snowball fight as he and others waited to board the hayrides. "Here, everybody is alike."

Longenecker said that as the campers turn 18, many of them come back as staff, like Ian and Amber Burkhart, who attended their first burn camps in 1997 and 1998, respectively. They met at camp, fell in love, got married and now return as counselors.

"They get to know that they are not alone," Amber Burkhart said. "There are others going through the same thing."

Ian Burkhart said the kids love coming to Black Lake because their previous camp location was exceptionally crowded.

"The place is awesome," he added. "The kids love it." — *UAW*

## Labor News From the World Wide Web

# The Picket Line

## Harvard student workers win new union election

**A**fter weeks of hearings and deliberations, the NLRB in a report filed April 19, affirmed that the Harvard Graduate Students Union-UAW's concerns over Harvard's list of eligible voters was valid and could lead to another election. In the report and recommendations of the NLRB hearing officer the NLRB wrote:

"I find that the Employer has not substantially complied with the voter list requirements set forth in Section 102.62(d) of the Board's Rules and Regulations. Accordingly, I recommend that [HGSU-UAW's] objection be sustained and that, if a revised tally of ballots does not result in the Petitioner receiving a majority of the valid votes cast, the results of this election be set aside and a new election be directed."

Should there be a new election, student workers at Harvard University will have a fair opportunity to vote to form a union and collectively bargain over their working conditions. "We are encouraged by the hearing officer's decision, as Harvard graduate workers believe that if given a fair election, Harvard graduate workers will choose to join together to collectively bargain," says Niharika Singh, a Ph.D. student worker in the department of Public Policy. "By joining the UAW, we gain a national voice in advocating on issues we care about, like protections for international student workers and protections from discrimination and harassment."

Any future election will depend on the outcome of a revised tally of votes from last December. Under the NLRB process, Harvard University has an opportunity to file exceptions to the recommendation to the regional director. The deadline to do so is May 3. — *UAW*

## Court reinstates health care benefits for Honeywell retirees

**T**he power and advantage of collective bargaining often outlasts a union member's active employment. This was demonstrated again by the U.S. District Court of the Southern District of Ohio when it agreed with the UAW that the lifetime health care benefits the union negotiated for Honeywell workers in Greenville, Ohio, in 2003 are just that: lifetime.

UAW Local 2413 retirees who retired from Honeywell prior to June 1, 2012, and their spouses are entitled to lifetime benefits the company agreed to in collective bargaining in 2003.

That means that instead of those benefits being terminated, as the company had planned to do at the end of February, the court issued a permanent injunction against the company doing so.

"Plaintiffs have proven, by a preponderance of the evidence, that Honeywell agreed to provide lifetime healthcare benefits to its retirees at the Greenville, Ohio, plant. Honeywell's plan to terminate those benefits as of Feb. 28, 2017, therefore breaches the terms of the relevant collective bargaining agreements," the ruling states.

The victory for the retirees was a hard-fought one, said Ken Lortz, director of Region 2B, which includes Ohio.

"This judgement speaks to the strength of collective bargaining agreements and why the benefits union members negotiate protect them in cases where a company decides to change its mind after bargaining in good faith," Lortz said. "Imagine how devastating it is for someone to retire with an understanding that they have lifetime health care benefits and then be notified that the company is threatening to take it away."

The ruling also considered that the cost caps provisions applied prospectively to future retirees only and only took effect after the contract expired. The fact that the parties negotiated a retirement incentive that offered retiree benefits to eligible employees as an enticement to retire further demonstrated that the intent was to establish vested lifetime benefits. — *UAW*

# Good times & bad, UAW was there for 249 retiree

By Colleen Taylor

**W**hen you visit with Local 249 retiree and military veteran Richard Schmick, he will tell you about the many first experiences he had during his years at Ford Motor Company. Like the first time he saw a woman work on the assembly line at the Mahwah Assembly plant. Or when he spotted his first robot at the Kansas City Assembly plant when he transferred there in 1983. He will also reminisce with you about the first UAW negotiated dental plan in 1973 and even the UAW profit sharing contract win in 1982.

He will pull out of a folder and find his old Ford pay check stub from 1972 year end that shows he made \$4.51 an hour, cost of living 30 cents and he made a total of \$12,950 dollars that year. Of course that was with many hours of working overtime that year, noted Schmick.

But what Schmick speaks most passionately about is the day he learned the news that his New Jersey plant would be shuttered. It was in 1980, that Schmick joined thousands of UAW-Ford workers who were displaced with the closing of the Ford-Mahwah Assembly plant. Schmick, who had 21 years in with Ford at that time, found himself laid off with 3,359 other hourly workers.

In the last 70's auto sales had begun to slump. The Big Three automakers began losing ground to the Japanese car makers who were making smaller, more fuel-efficient cars. Ford was hit particularly hard. Domestic car sales in 1980 dropped to almost half their 1978 level. That same year, the company lost \$1.54 billion in profits. In 1979, Ford Mahwah's truck assembly line closed. The closing of the entire Mahwah Assembly plant followed.

Schmick ended up being one of the lucky ones to be able to transfer to the Ford Edison Assembly plant, also in New Jersey, for a year and a half. Other hourly employees were not so

fortunate. But with that transfer, came a cost.

"The move to the Edison plant did not come with plant seniority or a moving allowance. We drove 83 miles a day back and forth to work", Schmick said. He drove with four others in a car pool for the entire year and a half and worked whatever jobs he was given. His 21 years of seniority with Ford meant nothing at the Edison plant.

"A few of us heard that St Louis was hiring so we signed up for it. I found out I was being transferred to Kansas City Assembly plant instead. I didn't even know what or where Kansas City was", said Schmick. After transferring to KCAP he became a forklift driver and retired in 1987 with 30 years.

When he retired he continued to be active with UAW, by serving on the Local 249 Retiree Council. He was Guide, then the Financial Secretary and also a Rep for the Retirement Planning Council. He attended summer school in Oklahoma, Washington, DC, and Michigan. He also drove for the Senior Citizens for Elderly People.

After he had a stroke, unfortunately he could no longer work. But it has not stopped him from enjoying life and traveling. He travels a "hell of a lot". He has been to the Grand Canyon, Hawaii, Panama Canal, Colorado, New Orleans, and Florida, just to name a few. He still has a few places on his bucket list like Austin, Texas. He has also taken



Local 249 retiree Richard Schmick came to KCAP when the Mahwah Assembly Plant closed in 1980. He retired in 1987. Photo by Don Lehman.

up wood working.

Schmick was able to tour the KCAP facility a couple of years ago, thanks to Local 249 member John Cartwright. "I couldn't believe how much has

changed since I left in 1987", said Schmick. "I don't miss it though".

"I was always thankful to be part of the UAW. Even after the Mahwah Assembly plant closed I still had a roof over my head and food on my table. I still had a job at Ford Motor Company because of the UAW", said Schmick.

He would like the active Local 249 membership to remember how important it is to be a part of the UAW. He reminds everyone not to take for granted the union negotiated benefits that they receive today. He encourages membership to not forget about the retirees who came before them.

"It was because of the past struggles by our union brothers and sisters that they have the benefits they do today. Many in the past didn't receive them and they were not freely given to us by Ford Motor Company", said Schmick. "Never forget that".

**Win \$50 A Week**

**WOMEN'S AWARENESS DRAWING**

Enter each week to win \$50 • Forms Available at the Union Hall Starting May 12 • Return Forms to Union Hall for First Drawing by May 19 •

First Drawing Held May 22 • Weekly Drawings for Four Weeks

Total Prizes of \$200

Sponsored By the UAW Local 249 Women's Committee



Local 249 Women's Committee members and supporters, Karen Combe, left to right, Josh Crawford, Cynthia Taylor, Tonisha Greer, Madison Hicks (seated), Kimberly Hicks, Laprett Rollins, retiree Karen Westfall-McGowan, retiree Lillian Gilbert, President Eric Hall, Barbara Zamora, Noveta Thomas, Denise Claypole, J'Nya Nelson (Seated), Dana Davidson and Jacque Childs helped make the annual Easter Egg Hunt a big success. Photo by Don Lehman.

# Local 249 Easter Egg Hunt a sweet success

*By Jacque Childs*

**L**ocal 249's annual Easter Egg Hunt, held April 9 at the union hall across from the plant was a big success. The event, for the children under 10 of active and retired union members creates a mad dash to gather up eggs from the softball field as hundreds of children frantically scoop up the eggs.

Members of the Women's Committee prepared 8,000 eggs for the hunt and 800 goody bags to distribute to each child who was there.

Cotton candy and Sno Cones were provided by volunteer Josh Crawford. Face painters and a photo booth for pictures with the Easter Bunny were also available for UAW families.

The Women's Committee wants to thank all the volunteers who made the event possible, including Josh Crawford, the face painters and Gary Brown who ran the photo booth. We also want to thank Don Lehman for taking photos again this year.



# Nissan Workers' March for Union Rights Recalls the Civil Rights Struggle

**E**choes of an earlier time in Mississippi were unmistakable: Rights denied and rights to be fought for. An entity that would protect the rights of some people, but viciously oppose the rights of others. A coalescing of people of different races, ages, faiths, socio-economic status and other backgrounds coming together to fight for justice. Prominent individuals from across the nation and the world lending their name and influence to the cause.

But on March 4, when all was said and done at the March on Mississippi to support Nissan workers who want to vote on union representation without intimidation, the question to be answered remained:

"Why Mississippi?"

The question this time isn't posed to government officials protecting a system of racial segregation and denial of civil rights that has left a permanent stain on our nation's soul. The question this time is posed to a global corporation that allows employees at every one of its facilities to unionize – except in the United States. In our country and particularly in this state, Nissan fights viciously to prevent its workers from exercising their civil right to join a union and better their lives.

UAW President Dennis Williams told Nissan workers that the only path to economic justice is through collective bargaining. Photo by C.J. Hamilton

Indeed, why Mississippi? What makes Mississippi workers so different that they are not granted the same civil rights as workers elsewhere? The workforce at the sprawling manufacturing facility 10 miles north of Jackson, Mississippi, is 80 percent African-American and is in a state that lags the nation in wages, education, health care and other standards of living. Nissan workers want to change that.

"I have two daughters and I want them to grow up in a community where they will have a real shot at a good future and a decent living," said Morris Mock, who works on the paint line. "That's why I'm going to keep fighting for good jobs at Nissan's plant, no matter what it takes."

Having a voice on the job, like their counterparts at manufacturing facilities in Brazil, France, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom and elsewhere, would give them power to try to improve wages, benefits, health and safety and other working conditions.

"We understand that we are better together," UAW President Dennis Williams said as the crowd, easily in

the thousands, basked in the sun of a Springlike day. "We know that the only path to have economic justice is through collective bargaining."

Even though the criticism of Nissan's anti-worker campaign in Canton was intense at times, Williams reminded the workers that this movement was about them, their families, their future and the ability to change what is in front of them.

"This isn't about being anti-Nissan," Williams said. "This is about a balance of power. It's about the workers having a voice in the workplace."

Having that voice heard could help improve issues like health and safety. A moment of silence was held for Derrick Whiting, a Nissan worker who died on the job in 2015. Whiting had complained of chest pains and went to the plant's medical facility, but was sent back to the line and later collapsed. The company disputes that Whiting died on the job.

Travis Parks, a Nissan production assistant, said workers know better.

"I was there," Parks said. "I saw him on the floor and they're telling me I'm lying."

The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued multiple citations against Nissan for violations of federal health and safety laws. The most recent citations, issued in February, found that Nissan "did not furnish employment and a place of employment which was free from recognized hazards that were causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees."

Another key issue for Nissan workers is the ability to transition from being a temporary worker without any idea of when they might become a permanent worker. Temps typically earn much less and have no control over when they are working, which disrupts family life. Wages and the lack of power they have to control work issues like their schedule is actually something the state uses as a selling point to manufacturers seeking to open plants. The state of Mississippi



Thousands of Nissan workers and their supporters marched on the plant to demand that the automaker allow a vote on union representation without fear or intimidation. UAW.

has given Nissan \$1.33 billion in tax breaks since Nissan began operating in Canton in 2003.

"For so long, Mississippi has sold

us as a cheap labor state," said Derrick Johnson, president of the Mississippi state chapter of the NAACP. "We're not going to take it." — UAW

## Where are my UAW dues dollars going?

**A**t the 36th Constitutional Convention held in June, 2014, the delegates passed changes to Article 16 of the UAW Constitution which changed the UAW dues structure for the first time since March 1968.

For members who work in either the private sector or public with a legal right to strike, the minimum monthly dues is an amount equivalent to 2.5 hours of straight time pay for members working full time paid on an hourly basis, or 1.44% of gross straight time monthly wages for members paid on a salaried basis and for members employed part-time and paid on an hourly basis.

A portion of member's dues dollars go to the UAW Strike and Defense Fund. The core purpose of the Strike Assistance Fund is to provide direct material support to our fellow members who are fighting for a fair contract, including defending their right to collective bargaining. It cannot be used for regular operating expenses.

The funds going to the International Union's General Fund cover a broad array of support services for local unions including but not limited to:

- Health and safety experts to investigate accidents and train members to fix health and safety issues in their workplaces
- Legal staff to help locals win fights in court; for example, UAW attorneys have won major cases preserving retiree health insurance
- Health care and pension experts to take on the employer's consultants
- Website, magazine and other resources to keep members informed
- Financial analysts to help local committees understand their employer's finances and business strategies, so that we can take them on and win
- Auditors to help local unions keep their books in good order, so they can stay accountable to members
- Assistance for locals and members who are facing hard times or natural disasters
- Organizers to build our density so we can win better agreements



Local 249 members painted living quarters at the City Union Mission, which feeds and provides temporary shelter to the homeless in Kansas City, April 26. Samantha Vanover, front row left to right, Shenee Phillips, Erica Eckart, Kelsey Pinzino, Lisa Marie, Amy, David and Ezra Winkler, Terri Hall, second row, Cody Lewis, Jessica Love, Arthur Negrete, Aaron Followwill, third row, Sean Resch, Barbara Zamora, Jo Meneses, Levi Oberfoell, Jason Oehlke, fourth row, Gary Thomas, back, Kevin Hieronymus, Robert Crowley and Steven Woods spent the day working to help the homeless. Not pictured are Lane Elliot, John Travers, Adam Sanders and Scott Petterson. Photos by Don Lehman.

# Local 249 members help the homeless

*By Pat Hayes*

**L**ocal 249 members volunteered to help Kansas City homeless people by spending April 26 painting, caulking and moving beds at the City Union Mission. Members who could not participate donated \$1,700 to benefit the Mission's efforts to help the homeless.

Gary Thomas, who drives a hi-lo on C-Crew in the Truck System spear-

headed the effort. Jason Oehlke collected donations from members to aid

the effort. Terri Hall collected donations in the Transit System. Sean Resch made and sold hot dogs to raise donations.

"Everybody helped in some way," said Gary Thomas, "by collecting donations or donating their time. Our members helped renovate the third floor of the City Union Mission where

the homeless are given temporary shelter. It was a great day."

We're in a perfect storm, says Thomas. We're being attacked from all sides. "The best way to fight back," he says, "is to get out there and show people who we really are. I'm extremely grateful to having our union's support"



Steven Woods



Shenee Phillips



Amy and Ezra Winkler



Cody Lewis

# SAFE JOBS

# EVERY

# WORKER'S

# RIGHT



*By Gwen Starkey*

**A**s we go through our normal routines nonchalantly, we often forget about the dangers that lurk around us. Nobody ever began their workday thinking that this might be the day I don't come home, but for some, a kiss goodbye might be their last one. Not long ago, everything from the air we breathe to the buildings we work in, highly dangerous conditions existed, lacking rules and regulations that serve to keep worker's safe. April 28, Workers' Memorial Day, commemorates the lives that have been given in the pursuit of modern comfort and conveniences, and stands for the worldwide efforts to create safety in the workplace.

"It is estimated that twelve workers lose their life on the job every day in the United States. This is unacceptable and affects many of us in many ways; spouses become widows, children lose a mother or father, co-workers lose a friend and we, as a union, lose a brother or sister," UAW President, Dennis Williams said. On April 28th, we take time to reflect and remember those who went to work but unfortunately never returned home because they lost their life while on the job."

The first Workers' Memorial Day was observed on April 28, 1989, on the anniversary of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, which was established in 1971. Forty-six years ago, Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), promising every worker the right to a safe job. Under OSHA, employers are respon-

sible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their workers. OSHA's role is to ensure these conditions for America's workers by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education, and assistance.

Unions and their allies have fought hard to make that promise a reality, winning protections that have made jobs safer, saved hundreds of thousands of lives, and prevented millions of workplace injuries and illnesses. But after years of struggle, these hard-won gains are now threatened. The Trump administration has launched an all-out assault on regulations. The president has ordered that for every new protection, two existing safeguards must be removed from the books. At the same time Republicans in Congress have moved quickly to overturn new rules issued by the Obama administration.

Agency budgets and enforcement programs are on the chopping block. The safety and health of workers and the public are in danger.

"Today we are reminded to remain vigilant in the workplace and in the halls of State Legislatures and Congress to protect us all from workplace injuries and fatalities. There is much work to do be done," Dennis Williams said. This year alone anti-worker, right wing Members of Congress have been working to gut workplace protections, even going so far as to pass a law to recklessly eliminate common sense, long standing recordkeeping policies that simply required large employers in hazardous industries to keep their health and safety records for five years. These same politicians are now threatening to slash funding for workplace inspectors which will make it harder to make sure companies are following our laws. Speaking up and taking precautions in the workplace saves lives. And advocating against efforts by politicians to weaken safety regulations, safety enforcement, and record keeping saves lives as well. Now more than ever we must speak up for safety in the workplace"

We need to organize and fight back to defend hard won victories

by working people from attacks by right-wing Republicans and business groups. We need to commit to fighting until all workers have safe jobs and the freedom to form unions to seek a better future. Demand that your elected officials put workers' well-being above corporate interests. Demand jobs that are safe and healthy and pay fair wages. Make it clear that the labor movement will defend the right of every worker to a safe job and fight until that promise is fulfilled.

Every year more people are killed at work than in wars. Most don't die of mystery ailments, or in tragic accidents. They die because an employer decided their safety just wasn't that important a priority. "Workers' Memorial Day is a somber reminder of the importance of workplace safety and health. Where workplace hazards exist, workers are at risk," said Joel Sacks, director of the Department of Labor and Industries. "There's no better way to honor these workers than by dedicating ourselves to making sure these tragedies don't happen again."

On this Workers' Memorial Day, as we mourn the loss of our brothers and sisters killed on the job, let's all remain committed to protecting workers and improving workplace safety.

# TPTs to convert to short term supplementals

By Todd Hillyard

**T**he company will be switching all of the Temporary Part time (TPT) to Short Term Supplemental (STS) status on May 1st. They will be working full time hours until the Saturday after Labor Day. The company is also calling approximately 160 additional STS employees back for the summer months. We are working on getting the 32 transfers back that have recall rights to KCAP currently and once we get them back we can start to flip the TPTs to full time status as needed. I am hopeful that by the end of this year we will be able to start converting some of our TPTs to full time. One thing that will affect them sooner is if we go back to TAG relief in the Truck System anytime soon. That would result in many temps being hired full time immediately to man up for relief again. We will continue pushing the company to get our transfers back and to begin hiring our temps and will keep them updated in the coming months.

The Transit System will stay on overtime until September now due to a large fleet order. The night shift will be working a mandatory Saturday on April 29.

After September the schedule is showing 40 hours and the company is still trying to get the 4x10 schedule approved for the last half of the year but it has not been approved yet. As soon as we get final word we will let the membership know.

The Truck side will continue on the 3-Crew pattern and just last week I was notified 10,000 units of overtime will be added to our F-150 side. There will be three voluntary holidays offered to C-Crew the first on May 29th and seven Super Days that will be split up between A and B-Crew.

Just a few months back truck volume looked flat going forward and over the past few weeks they have had to add 30,000 units of overtime to the 3 Truck plants. If truck volume continues to get stronger we could be looking at adding tag relief back in on truck side or additional weekend overtime days.

The company has officially notified me of the July shutdown period this year and it will be two weeks July 3rd and July 10th for both sides of the plant.

The non-promotional sign up will be coming in June and we will remind everyone in a bulletin prior to the books being put out.

In discussions with the company a few weeks ago we separated the weld inspector classifications in Truck and Transit. This was done after many of our members in these classifications were reduced across the plant and both sides are completely different now with the aluminum truck and steel Transit.

In the future body inspectors will exercise seniority in their system and not plant wide. Any body inspectors that were reduced will still maintain recall rights for 24 months provided they

do not accept a new classification.

When the elections are over we will begin planning our 2nd annual charity golf outing so those of you that helped us make it such a successful event can look forward to your phones ringing again. We raised over \$42,000 last year for homeless Veterans and we hope to raise over \$50,000 this year.

As everyone knows the tri annual elections are almost here and voting will be on May 4th and 6th. We put the elections back in the plant to make it more convenient for the member-



Local 249 Bargaining Chair Todd Hillyard reported that the Transit system will stay on overtime until September now due to a large fleet order. Photo by Don Lehman.

ship to vote this year and we hope to have a good turnout. Know who the candidates are that you are voting for and ask them questions when you see

them campaigning. They will be working for you and will have an impact on our plant and our reputation both here and in Detroit.

## Let's be our brothers' keepers

**R**alph Butler was the most senior skilled trades electrician at Freightliner's Cleveland, North Carolina, assembly plant. He and a co-worker were responsible for maintaining equipment on the loading docks. On July 13 they were troubleshooting a dock leveler. After working the controls and observing dock plate motion, Butler went in for a closer look. Then he used a pry bar to push a hydraulic motor's plug back into a receptacle. The dock plate appeared to be lowered all the way but when the hydraulic unit was re-energized, the plate came down just a few inches more, crushing him. He died eight days later in the hospital.

UAW skilled trades often need the power on to observe where the machinery is malfunctioning; the problems can't be determined with the power off. The deadliest conditions lie in the gray area between full-energy isolation (Lock Out/Tag Out, also known as LOTO) and troubleshooting.

With complex and sometimes poorly designed equipment, the problems are hidden; guards must be removed to reveal jams, robot cells must be entered to observe problems up close, control logic for automation must be studied. All this takes time. When a complex piece of machinery breaks down, our skilled trades are always faced with the pressure to get

the machine back up and running as quickly as possible. But an "alternative means of control" for each hazard must be in place before proceeding. No one with training and a thorough understanding of the equipment should have to face these hazards.

Developing and sharing those safe work methods are everyone's responsibility. This means pointing out hazards when you see them, speaking out about the way the work really gets done and fighting for safer methods. In a 2016 letter sent to all UAW locals President Dennis Williams wrote:

"All of us have to be our brothers' and sisters' keepers when it comes to health and safety. It's not enough to personally follow health and safety

rules. When we observe someone putting themselves or others in jeopardy, we must speak out. It's literally a matter of life or death."

Workers Memorial Day is a somber reminder that working safely doesn't happen by accident. Preparation is a critical part of maintaining the health and safety of our members.

In the last 30 months, six UAW members have lost their lives because of faulty Lock Out/Tag Out (LOTO) procedures, machine-guarding failures and the failure to follow safety procedures. Our union's collective and concentrated efforts are needed to safeguard everyone.

It is our responsibility to follow safety procedures but it is also our responsibility to look out for our brothers and sisters, especially if they are taking dangerous shortcuts. It doesn't matter if they are trying to get the job done in a timeframe set by management. Safety comes first always.

It is imperative that all workers return home to their family safe and sound, alive and healthy.— UAW

# Region 5 plans for right to work referendum

By Eric Hall

**If you have not noticed the attack on labor in Jefferson City, then you must be living in a cave. The right-to-work bill has been passed as we know, and now the referendum to bring it to a public vote will begin. On April 7, Region 5 held a conference call to all presidents and chairman.**

Director Gary Jones laid out the direction for the Region to follow. He made it clear that we won't start as a local prior to the Region 5 visiting our plant and training a core group of our members for the signature gathering process. We will have that training here at the union hall on May 9 at 2:30 pm and 5:30 pm for any members or retirees wishing to help with the signature drive.

The Missouri House has passed HB 1931. This bill will repeal the Missouri prevailing wage laws that are in place to date. It has drawn much criticism from the labor unions, but unlike many other bills, the non-union trades are not in agreement with the bill.

Many of the non-union contractors bid those jobs in hope of getting the higher paid, union scale jobs, and their employees depend on that wage much like the union men and women do. Their lifestyles are set on the prevailing wage that accompanies those jobs. This bill could lead to many union and nonunion workers losing their quality of life and creating financial ruin for them.

Missouri's current prevailing wage Law establishes a minimum wage rate that must be paid to workers on public works construction projects in Missouri, such as bridges, roads, and

government buildings. The prevailing wage rate differs by county and for different types of work.

The Prevailing Wage Law applies to all public works projects constructed by or on behalf of state and local public bodies.

Each year, Missouri's prevailing wage rates are determined based on information provided by contractors, public bodies, labor organizations and other entities through the Contractor's Wage Survey.

State Senator Jake Hummel, who is a union member, says repeal of the prevailing wage law would cause workers in communities to lose jobs to lesser skilled workers.

"If you're in a county where the average wage is 12 to 13 dollars an hour, well then that's what you should bid that package at," Hummel said.

"Undercutting those local contractors that depend on that work is doing nothing more than having a race to the bottom." I was asked to speak to class of students at Missouri Valley College concerning the laws attacking labor and the middle class. It was truly an honor to do so, but it was very interesting looking at the faces of these kids who don't think any of this will affect them.



Local 249 President Eric Hall updates the membership on the right-to-work referendum at the April Membership Meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

I spoke of the impact of Right to Work laws on the middle class and labor with very little response. The professor asked a few questions on prevailing wage and the impact its repeal would have. I answered the question with the student paying attention but not reacting.

As I explained the overall effect of the laws I mentioned education. I made the point, that with right to work and repealing of prevailing wages that Missouri's tax base will erode. I then explained that the first bill Governor

Grietens signed was right to work.

A few days later he cut funding for public colleges and schools. The reaction was somewhat priceless as then it hit them. Many of them are from public schools and some of them have parents dependent on a school district for support. The discussion that followed was educational for all of us.

I hope everyone had a great Easter with the two union negotiated paid days off. The day after Easter was a concession in recent years that the UAW won back in the last contract.



## 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.

# Retirees oppose right to work

By Susan Pena

**Local 249 President Eric Hall spoke to retirees on the labor sponsored referendum opposing right to work in Missouri. Jason Starr, Local 249 Vice-President said that 400,000 signatures will be needed to put the issue on the ballot to override right-to-work legislation passed by Republicans in the Missouri House and Senate and signed into law by Gov. Eric Greitens. We will hear more about this next month. Treasurer Neal Byers also spoke about right to work and the importance of voting.**

Right to work does not guarantee any rights. In fact, by weakening unions and collective bargaining, it destroys the best job security protection that exists: a union contract.

Meanwhile, it allows workers to pay nothing and receive all the benefits of union membership. Federal labor law ruling of the National Labor Relations Board and decisions by the United States Supreme Court requires that unions must represent every eligible employee whether or not he or she pays dues.

This forces unions to use their time and their dues paying members' money to provide union benefits to free riders who are not willing to pay their fair share.

Steve Morris, Chairman of the Election Committee spoke about the upcoming Local election. Retirees may vote Thursday, May 4th 5:00 a.m. -Friday 5:00 a.m. and Saturday, May 6th 5:00 a.m. - Sunday 5:00 a.m. at the union hall. All retirees in good standing are eligible to vote for the Execu-

tive Board in this election. Larry Rupp, your Retiree Representative, is running unopposed, but would appreciate your support. Please come vote.

Our retiree Executive Board election was held. The new and incumbent officers will be sworn in at next month's meeting. Congratulations to all. Thank you all for voting. Ray Wohler, Chairman will be stepping down. Thank you Ray for your leadership and all your hard work.

Charlie Scott was presented with a plaque from the membership thanking him for 40 years of service. Thank you Charlie for all you've done.

Service Officer Bill Parker announced retirees: Congratulations to Patrick M. Hayes.

The March deaths were: Carl E. Austin, Constance Cardin, Charles E. Elliott, Paul G. Haider and Ora A. King. Please pray for them and their families.

Lori Marin announced the eight April birthday and two anniversaries. Roma and Bill Bauer have been married



Local 249 retiree Charlie Scott was presented with a plaque honoring his 40 years of service to the union and its retiree chapter. Photo by Don Lehman.

52 years. Anita and Herbert Pickens have been married 13 years. Congratulations to all.

Bingo will be held on the third Friday of the month at 11:30. Please bring

a snack and white elephant gift.

Our next meeting will be held May 17, 2017 at 10:30 a.m. Please bring a dessert or covered dish. We hope to see you then.

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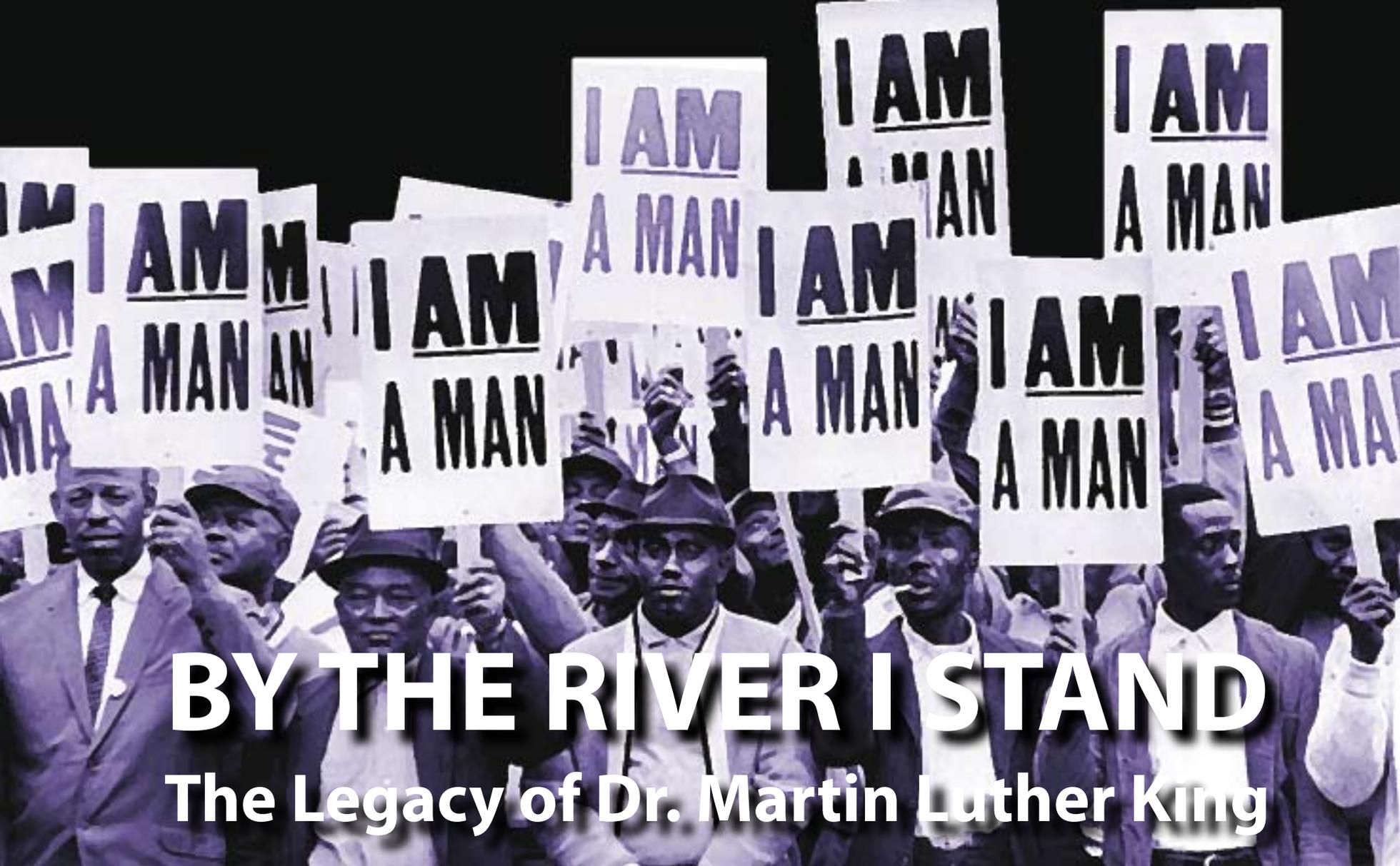
## LEGAL SERVICES PLAN

**Call 800-482-7700 to Open a New Case**

Eligible participants in the Plan will include active and retired UAW-represented employees at FCA, Ford and General Motors and their surviving spouses. The Plan offers an "office work" benefit, which provides services for the following types of legal matters:

*Wills And Trusts • Powers Of Attorney • Purchase Or Sale And Other Uncontested Issues Regarding Residential Real Property Deeds • Uncontested Family Matters • Credit Reporting • Contracts For Goods Or Services • Residential Leases • Birth Or Marriage Certificates • Name Changes*

"Office work" services will include advice, document preparation, document review, factual and legal research, and correspondence. No representation will be provided by the Plan in court or in any litigation situation. In addition to office work services, the Plan does provide UAW members and retirees with full representation, including attendance at hearings, for Social Security disability applications, suspensions and terminations. For many legal matters that are not covered under the new Plan, or that require court activity, the Plan intake staff can still process a participant's inquiries. Such matters will be referred to outside private cooperating attorneys, who will provide legal services to Plan participants at a reduced legal rate.



# BY THE RIVER I STAND

## The Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King

*By David Winkler*

**M**embers of the Civil and Human Rights Committee joined members of the Greater Kansas City Area Alliance members on April 4th, at the Gem Theater to commemorate the 49th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The program opened by screening a showing of the film "At the River I Stand."

When you walked in to the Gem Theater you could feel the electricity in the air. Between the history of the theater, which used to be a silent movie theater built by the Shriners in the historic 18th and Vine District. It has been around and an important part of Kansas City culture since 1912. It has seen many trials and tribulations in that community for over 100 years, so it was the proper setting to view such an important film on quite a historic day.

It was a great representation put on by Stand Up KC, and was attended by not just workers fighting for \$15 and a union. There were members from the UAW, CBTU, Interfaith Ministries, activists, and just working class people in general. After the movie, leaders from the Christian, Jewish, And Islamic communities were there to say a prayer to help the memory of Dr. King live on, and to show the correlation between the civil rights struggles 50 years ago to the struggle

low wage workers face today.

"At the River I Stand" recounts the two months prior to the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. King was in the process of trying to unionize the striking sanitation workers in Memphis, who later became American Federation of State, County, and Mu-

nicipal Employees(AFSCME).

The organizing effort was fought hard by the mayor of Memphis at the time, Henry Loeb. After 64 days on strike, about 1,300 African-American workers became the newly organized Local 1733 of AFSCME.

Dr. King was shot while speaking to members of his Southern Christian Leadership Conference on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis Tennessee and died later in a nearby hospital.

Some people may wonder about why and how the life of Dr. King is

relevant to autoworkers in general, but he plays a role in every job at our plant as well as every other UAW plant across the nation. First he was an avid supporter of the American worker, as well as unions, whether they were black, white, Christian, Jewish, or any other category someone may label themselves.

Second, he was a critical ally and supported Walter Reuther in the fights the UAW faced, as well as being a famed non-violent leader for rights of every American, as well as people of color.

The AFL-CIO, UAW, and most other unions believed that the fate of every worker was intertwined with the struggle of the civil rights movement. I was proud to be present at this production with such a diverse group of people; old and young, men and woman, rich and poor, Christian, Jewish or Muslim, gay, straight, transgender or bi-sexual.

It really shows that today we are still trying to honor Dr. King today by living the one of famous quotes by the man himself: "the time is always right to do what's right." The production ended with a closing of people leaving flowers at a memorial for Dr. King, quietly and non-violently, just as he would have intended.



*Local 249 members joined low-wage workers and others April 4 at the Gem Theater to celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King.*