

FIRST LOCAL NEWS

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February 2019



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International Union United Auto,
Aerospace and Agricultural Workers Local 249
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Pleasant Valley, MO 64068



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UAW Local 249 Bargaining Committee member Don Picard played Santa Claus for developmentally disabled clients at three Developmental Potential Inc. locations in the Kansas City area Dec. 13. Photo by Don Lehman.



Members of the Civil and Human Rights Committee, left to right, Sharis Johnson, Jeremy Fue, Sade Ott and (front) Tamara Maxwell celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with this year's MLK shirts. Photo by Don Lehman.



On December 8th, children filled the halls of Local Union 249 as they gathered to celebrate our annual breakfast with Santa. Photo by Don Lehman.



Shirley Mata was honored at the Democratic Central Committee's Winterfest by receiving a special award for distinguished service as Woman of the Year. Photo by Don Lehman.

First Local News

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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.

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The Picket Line

UAW workers rally in Detroit to urge auto execs to 'invest in us'

Hundreds of United Auto Workers members impacted by impending idling of General Motors plants gathered outside a black tie event at Cobo Center Jan. 18 to demand automotive executives "invest in us."

Chanting and carrying signs as they led a candlelight procession from Hart Plaza to the site of the North American International Auto Show Charity Preview, demonstrators aimed to highlight the automaker's decision to idle several Michigan, Maryland and Ohio plants. — *Detroit News*

Statement from the UAW on Toledo GM civil rights incidents

No UAW member should ever feel the sting of racism in the workplace. The UAW has long believed as part of our core values that discrimination has no place in the workplace. We have created a series of avenues that allow our members to address discrimination, including through our civil rights committees, UAW Constitutional procedures, the grievance process and other workplace mechanisms. But the fact is, even in 2018, there are still members who are touched by unacceptable behavior. We take this seriously and our goal is to make all members feel safe and welcome in their workplace, always. — *UAW*

When it comes to Sunshine Law, Missouri is the Show-Me State no more

On [January 15], the Missouri House, controlled by a veto-proof Republican majority, voted to establish a new rule that would allow elected representatives to keep their records shielded from prying eyes. This follows a November vote in the state in which 62 percent of Missourians enshrined into the state's constitution a new provision that applies the Sunshine Law to state lawmakers. In effect, House Republicans raised their collective middle fingers and pointed them at voters. — *St. Louis Post Dispatch*

Millenials and unions

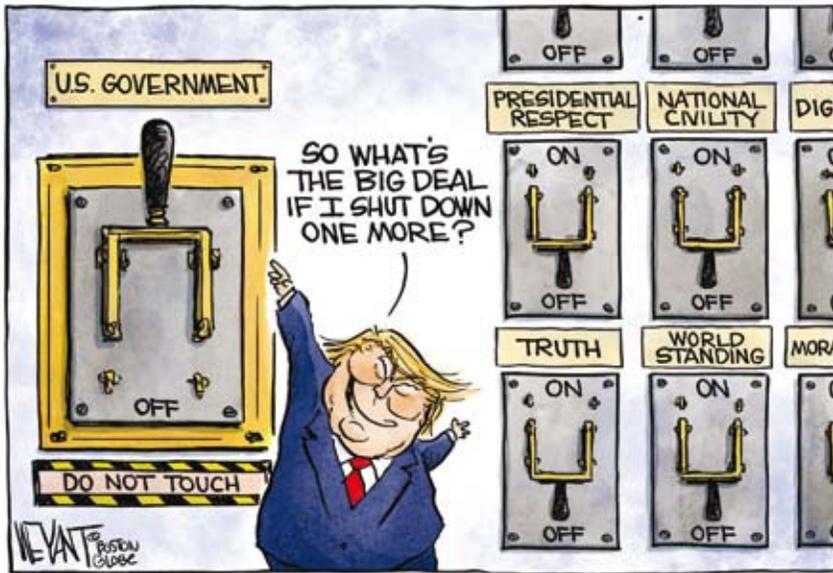
We hear a lot about Millennials, and how this generation's attitudes toward certain products and industries are shaping the future of our economy. While it hasn't received nearly as much attention, Millennial attitudes towards workplace conditions are also significant, with new research showing that they hold a very favorable view of labor unions.

A report published by the Pew Research Center found that 68 percent of adults age 18 to 29 hold a favorable view of unions, while only 46 percent hold a favorable view of corporations. — *UAW*

Global union suspends Volkswagen agreement

"As the German car manufacturer consistently refuses to accord the same rights to its workers in Chattanooga ... as it does in the rest of the world, IndustriALL Global Union is today suspending its long-standing global agreement with Volkswagen," the Switzerland-based entity said in a statement.

IndustriALL Global Union's executive committee has agreed to suspend the global framework agreement, called the Declaration on Social Rights and Industrial Relations at Volkswagen, safeguarding workers' rights "if the German car giant continued to refuse to allow workers at its plant in Chattanooga to join a union." — *Times Free Press*



GM leaves workers' future uncertain

By Gary Jones

The focus of General Motors' November announcement shutting down plants in Lordstown, Ohio; Hamtramck and Warren, Michigan; and Baltimore, Maryland shouldn't be about money. It should be about people.

UAW GM members are dedicated and committed to making a great product, supporting the success of a company, and supporting a solid, prosperous community.

Unfortunately, that's not how it's playing out. UAW GM members are facing the disruption of their families.

On that morning of Nov. 26, Detroit resident Angelique Noble -- an assembler at General Motors Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly Plant -- sat down with her usual morning coffee to watch the television news. As she looked at the screen, her phone began to ring almost simultaneously with the newscaster telling Angelique, along with the rest of the world, that her life was about to change.

That's how Angelique learned she would soon be out of a job and possibly need to move to another state. The announcement means the 47-year-old and her fiancé will be postponing their June wedding and living in limbo. There's a possibility she may be relocated to a Flint or Lansing plant, an hours-long commute on a daily basis, but she's concerned it will mean a new state.

"My future is uncertain. But my fiancé has a 15-year-old daughter here, and I can't get married and then move to another state, if that is where my next job takes me," she says.

Dave Bishop, a quality inspector at the Lordstown facility in Youngstown, Ohio, was told in person at a factory meeting that same day. Six years away from retirement, Dave thought his biggest concern would be helping his four children, and grandson, make their way

into successful, happy lives. Now, he and his wife are wondering whether they'll need to pick up and move to Missouri ... Kentucky ... or if he'll even find a place to fulfill his retirement goals.

In fact, GM is a major importer of their own brands from China, Canada and Mexico now sold in the United States. This year, through October, GM produced 726,000 vehicles in Mexico. Most of those vehicles were shipped to the U.S. for sales.

Lordstown and Hamtramck employees are not victims of changing consumer demand. They are victims of GM's decisions to load up their Mexican plants at the expense of their U.S. plant.

Funny thing is -- GM's UAW workers are diehards and, even in the face of an uncertain future, they went back to work on that November day.

Bishop says fellow employees hugged, talked about their shock, then returned to work on the line. He says he saw a teardrop fall on a car, but the employee kept doing her job, staying strong.

"We built good cars that day, like we do every day," Dave says.

His cohort at the Hamtramck plant, Robert Patton, says one of the most confusing things to him is how a company can turn its back on dedicated employees who produce quality.

"We make quality products and take pride in what we do. We've shown this company that we are invested and can work through any situation and come out on top. Why would GM want to go anywhere else when they know they will get the best job done here?"

Indeed, Robert. Why?



Don Picard and his wife, Tanya played Santa and Mrs. Claus for developmentally disabled clients at three Developmental Potential Inc. locations in the Kansas City area Dec. 13. Local 249 members Cortez Sexton, Steven Woods, Eric and Sara Jones, Mitchell Crabtree, William O'Neal, Justin Johnson, Jason Chilli, Karen Combe, Lisa Pruett, Sean Resch, Nicole Zabel, Russell Dennis, A. J. Wilson, Adam Sanders and Gary Thomas were Santa's elves. Photo by Don Lehman

Santa trades his sleigh for an F-150

By Pat Hayes

Santa drove an F-150. Prancer, Dancer and Vixen were MIA. With Rudolph nowhere to be found a fleet of elves riding Harleys guided Mr. and Mrs. Claus on their rounds delivering toys and Christmas cheer to the developmentally disabled at three Kansas City area locations Dec. 13.

Santa, better known in these parts as Don Picard, a member of Local 249's Bargaining Committee, and his wife Tanya have been making the holidays a little brighter for four years now. Each year they deliver toys to clients at Developmental Potential Inc., which provides quality day habilitation services to adults with developmental disabilities.

The Picard's daughter, Lacy Taylor, who works at Developmental Potential, got them started when the Santa who used to visit ran into a conflict. For the past two years, the Picards have enlisted Santa's helpers, AKA Local 249's Motorcycle Committee, to deliver the

gifts to the Lee Summit, Independence and Kansas City locations operated by Developmental Potential.

Some of the developmentally disabled clients delivered hand-written letters for Santa to the Picards during the visit.

Many of the developmentally disabled people we meet on these visits truly believe they are meeting Santa Claus, according to Picard. Because it's so important to them, it makes it important to us.

"For many of these folks," says Picard, "the only Christmas they get is what we do. It's really emotional. They were crying. We were crying. Even the

Motorcycle Committee members had tears in their eyes."

Members of the Motorcycle Committee raised money by building decks and benches to purchase gifts for the clients at Developmental Potential, according to committee chair Gary Thomas.

In addition to the Picards, Local 249 members Cortez Sexton, Steven Woods, Eric and Sara Jones, Mitchell Crabtree, William O'Neal, Justin Johnson, Jason Chilli, Karen Combe, Lisa Pruett, Sean Resch, Nicole Zabel, Russell Dennis, A. J. Wilson, Adam Sanders took part.

The head elf, Motorcycle Committee Chair Gary Thomas, made sure there were no idle hands in Santa's workshop.

Developmental Potential serves adults over the age of 21. Its curriculum ranges from teaching basic skills

for independent living, such as health and safety, to the more advanced skills needed in finding a job, maintaining personal finances, and achieving self-reliance.

Developmental Potential's programming covers a number of areas including: personal hygiene, physical fitness, sign language and general communication skills, creativity training, music therapy, fine motor skills, household maintenance, money skills, social skills, cooking, and anger management.

"We would love to do more," says Picard. "The Motorcycle Committee and other Local 249 committees have really helped the last two years. Hopefully, next year, we'll all find a way to help even more."

If you can help, or want to get involved, contact Picard or a member of the Motorcycle Committee.



When a friend and neighbor of UAW Local 249 member Tom Morgason, Brody Oldham of Oldham Auctions mentioned that he was having difficulty moving a large amount of clothing from Wentworth Military Academy Auctions, Tom knew just how to help. Photo by Don Lehman.

The power of one voice: Tom Morgason

By Gwen Starkey

When you've been a UAW Local 249 member and have worked for Ford Motor Company as long as Thomas Morgason has, you tend to make many friends in various areas in the plant. So, when Tom's longtime friend and neighbor, Auctioneer of Oldham Auctions Brody Oldham, was speaking to him one day about how his auction was going at the Wentworth Military Academy, Morgason knew just how to help.

Oldham Auctions was selected to conduct the liquidation of Wentworth Military Academy and College in May of 2017 and when various clothing items weren't bringing in many bids, they were unsure of what they might do with the remaining inventory. They were selling a few items on their website, but thought there might be a better idea for what they might do with items that weren't selling so well.

"We got to a point where we needed to get off campus and all that was left was the clothing," Brody Oldham said. So they brought everything back to their facility and things that they knew would be hard to sell like trench coats, uniforms and things of that nature they started looking for different associations and organizations to donate them to and that's when Morgason put them in touch with UAW

Local 249.

"I actually contacted other organizations and I wasn't having any luck and I mentioned it to Tom and just through small talk one day he said let me talk to my local see what I can do to help you," Oldham said.

Morgason, a 28-year member of UAW Local 249 who works on the day-shift in water test on the Transit side and Chairperson of the Women's Committee, Jacque Childs just happen to be co-workers and what do co-workers do? Well, they talk.

"Jacque is such a wonderful co-worker and she donates so much time to our union," Morgason said. Whenever she is selling something, I always try to support and buy from her. I reached out to her because we work next to one another and I knew she was active in the union and could possibly help out

with getting these items donated to those in need. I just thought she would be the best person to get this thing going and I was right. She said that there were several organizations that could benefit from a donation of this magnitude and that these items would stay right here in the KC area."

"When I'm doing a fundraiser, Tom is always very supportive," Childs said. He's purchased three books of VCAP tickets. He's so giving and thoughtful."

Childs immediately went into action connecting Oldham with Financial Secretary Dana Davidson to work out the details. What transpired was a wonderful donation of trench coats, long insulated coats, camouflage coats, cold gear, summer shorts, pants, polo and khaki shirts and gloves.

An Oldham trailer arrived at the union hall packed to the gills with boxes. All of it new, still wrapped in packages. All different sizes and just an assortment of items that you might find in a general store at the Wentworth Military Academy.

Oldham Auction donations went to the VCP Community Project, Synergy House, City Union Mission, VA Hospital

and other organizations. There was a small snafu in the coverage in the media thinking that this stuff was going straight to the dump. Nothing could be further from the truth. These items were always going to be sold on his website or donated. Oldham has another shipment of gear that he plans to donate in January too. "It's going in the hands of people that need it," Oldham said, and I'm happy to have helped in that area."

Through the daily conversations Tom has had with his coworker Jacque Childs, whom he's known for years, he knows that the union is a great facilitator for helping out in the community. "I've worked for Ford for nearly 28 years and have many family members who are retired UAW Local 249 members," Morgason said. Our union really does great things in and around our community helping great organizations, so what better place for my friend and neighbor to donate some items."

A great big thank you to Brody Oldham of Oldham Auctions and Tom Morgason for your thoughtfulness and generosity. The world needs more folks like you.



MLK: W.E.B. Du Bois and the myth of inferiority

Last month, Local 249's Civil and Human Rights Committee celebrated the great civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, with a "Life and Legacy" event at the union hall. This month the nation observes African American History Month. First conceived as Negro History Week in 1925 by Carter G. Woodson, it was first observed in 1926. In 1976, the celebration was expanded to a full month during the nation's bicentennial by President Gerald R. Ford. These celebrations have inspired interest in many contributions African Americans have made and sparked corrections to the often distorted or racist interpretations of many white historians that were once widespread in our history books.

The focus of many of these celebrations will, quite naturally, focus on Dr. King. However, King was quite aware that the civil rights struggle of our own owed a great debt to the activists and leaders of earlier battles for civil and human rights. One of the greatest of those leaders was William Edward Burghardt Du Bois was an American sociologist, historian, civil rights activist, Pan-Africanist, author, writer and editor.

In a speech delivered at Carnegie Hall in New York City, February 23, 1968 on the 100th birthday of W.E.B. Du Bois, King paid tribute to Du Bois. King's speech that night remains an important piece of our history today because it can reconnect this generation with the struggles and lessons of the past.

Below, are excerpts from the first part of the speech. We urge interested readers to read the entire speech, which

can be found in the Historic Documents section of U.S. History.org at <http://www.ushistory.org/documents/dubois.htm>. Here is King's speech on W.E.B. Du Bois:

Tonight we assemble here to pay tribute to one of the most remarkable men of our time. Dr. Du Bois was not only an intellectual giant exploring the frontiers of knowledge, he was in the first place a teacher. He would have wanted his life to teach us something about our tasks of emancipation. One idea he insistently taught was that black people have been kept in oppression and deprivation by a poisonous fog of lies that depicted them as inferior, born deficient and deservedly doomed to servitude to the grave. So assiduously has this poison been injected into the mind of America that its disease has infected not only whites but many Negroes. So long as the lie was believed the brutality and crimi-

nality of conduct toward the Negro was easy for the conscience to bear. The twisted logic ran if the black man was inferior he was not oppressed-his place in society was appropriate to his meager talent and intellect. Dr. Du Bois recognized that the keystone in the arch of oppression was the myth of inferiority and he dedicated his brilliant talents to demolish it. There could scarcely be a more suitable person for such a monumental task. First of all he was himself unsurpassed as an intellect and he was a Negro. But beyond this he was passionately proud to be black and finally he had not only genius and pride but he had the indomitable fighting spirit of the valiant.

To pursue his mission, Dr. Du Bois gave up the substantial privileges a highly educated Negro enjoyed living in the North. Though he held degrees from Harvard and the University of Berlin, though he had more academic credentials than most Americans, black or white, he moved South where a majority of Negroes then lived. He deliberately chose to share their daily abuse and humiliation. He could have offered himself to the white rulers and exacted substantial tribute for selling his genius. There were few like him, Negro or white. He could have amassed

riches and honors and lived in material splendor and applause from the powerful and important men of his time. Instead, he lived part of his creative life in the South-most of it in modest means and some of it in poverty, and he died in exile, praised sparingly and in many circles ignored.

But he was an exile only to the land of his birth. He died at home in Africa among his cherished ancestors, and he was ignored by a pathetically ignorant America but not by history.

History cannot ignore W. E. B. Du Bois. Because history has to reflect truth and Dr. Du Bois was a tireless explorer and a gifted discoverer of social truths. His singular greatness lay in his quest for truth about his own people. There were very few scholars who concerned themselves with honest study of the black man and he sought to fill this immense void. The degree to which he succeeded discloses the great dimensions of the man.

Yet he had more than a void to fill. He had to deal with the army of white propagandists - the myth-makers of Negro history. Dr. Du Bois took them all on in battle. It would be impossible to sketch the whole range of his intellectual contributions. Back in the nineteenth century he laid out a program

of 100 years of study of problems affecting American Negroes and worked tirelessly to implement it.

Long before sociology was a science he was pioneering in the field of social study of Negro life and completed works on health, education, employment, urban conditions, and religion. This was at a time when scientific inquiry of Negro life was so unbelievably neglected that only a single university in the entire nation had such a program, and it was funded with \$5,000 for a year's work.

Against such odds Dr. Du Bois produced two enduring classics before the twentieth century. His *Suppression of the African Slave-Trade*, written in 1896, is Volume I in the *Harvard Historical Studies*. His study *The Philadelphia Negro*, completed in 1899, is still used today. Illustrating the painstaking quality of his scientific method, to do this work Dr. Du Bois personally visited and interviewed 5,000 people.

He soon realized that studies would never adequately be pursued nor changes realized without the mass involvement of Negroes. The scholar then became an organizer and with others founded the NAACP. At the same time he became aware that the expansion of imperialism was a threat to the emergence of Africa. He recognized the importance of the bonds between American Negroes and the land of their ancestors, and he extended his activities to African affairs. After World War I he called Pan-African Congresses in 1919, 1921, and 1923, alarming imperialists in all countries and disconcerting Negro moderates in America who were afraid of this restless, militant, black genius.

Returning to the United States from abroad, he found his pioneering agitation for Negro studies was bearing fruit and a beginning was made to broaden Negro higher education. He threw himself into the task of raising the intellectual level of this work. Much later, in 1940, he participated in the establishment of the first Negro scholarly publication, *Phylon*. At the same time he stimulated Negro colleges to collaborate through annual conferences to increase their effectiveness and elevate the quality of their academic studies. But these activities, enough to be the life work for ten men, were far from the sum of his achievements. In the six years between 1935 and 1941 he produced the monumental seven-hundred-page volume on *Black Reconstruction in America*, at the same time writing many articles and essays. *Black Reconstruction* was six years in writing but was thirty-three years in preparation. On its publication, one critic said: "It crowns the long, unself-

ish and brilliant career of Dr. Du Bois. It is comparable in clarity, originality and importance to the *Beards' Rise of American Civilization*." The *New York Times* said, "It is beyond question the most painstaking and thorough study ever made of the Negroes' part in Reconstruction," and the *New York Herald Tribune* proclaimed it "a solid history of the period, an economic treatise, a philosophical discussion, a poem, a work of art all rolled into one."

To understand why his study of the Reconstruction was a monumental achievement it is necessary to see it

in context. White historians had for a century crudely distorted the Negro's role in the Reconstruction years. It was a conscious and deliberate manipulation of history, and the stakes were high. The Reconstruction was a period in which black men had a small measure of freedom of action. If, as white historians tell it, Negroes wallowed in corruption, opportunism, displayed spectacular stupidity, were wanton, evil, and ignorant, their case was made. They would have proved that freedom was dangerous in the hands of inferior beings. One generation after another

of Americans were assiduously taught these falsehoods, and the collective mind of America became poisoned with racism and stunted with myths.

Dr. Du Bois confronted this powerful structure of historical distortion and dismantled it. He virtually, before anyone else and more than anyone else, demolished the lies about Negroes in their most important and creative period of history. The truths he revealed are not yet the property of all Americans but they have been recorded and arm us for our contemporary battles.



Local 249's Civil and Human Rights Committee sponsored a well-attended panel discussion on "Continuing Dr. King's Legacy" Jan. 19 at the union hall. Photo by Don Lehman.

The legacy of Dr. King and the civil rights battles to come

By Pat Hayes

Local 249's Civil and Human Rights hosted a well-attended panel discussion on the "Continuing Dr. King's Legacy" Jan. 19 at the union hall. The event celebrated the birthday of the great civil rights leader Martin Luther King and launched the observance of Black History Month which is celebrated annually in February.

Speakers at the event noted that during the 50s and 60s, Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement won big victories over segregation in employment, housing, and education. They expanded the right to vote and equal access to public accommodations. However, in the 50 years since King was assassinated, renewed attacks on voting rights, re-segregation of public schools and the killings of unarmed black men demonstrate that the fight for equal rights is not finished.

"Our work isn't finished," says Sade Ott, chair of Local 249's Civil and Human Rights Committee, "we are having a necessary conversation given the climate in the country."

Keynote speakers Missouri Black Caucus Chair Steven Roberts and Donna Birks, the former Financial Secretary at

Local 31 which represents UAW members at the General Motors Assembly Plant in Fairfax were joined by State Rep. Mark Ellebracht, Pat Jones of the A. Phillip Randolph Institute, Terrence Wise of Stand Up Kansas City, Tony Pryor of Local 31 and Shirley Mata of Local 249. The panel moderator was Dontay Wilson, the Recording Secretary of Local 31.

"It was an awesome panel," says Ott. "We discussed how the labor movement can help lead the fight for civil rights on the local level, particularly in fighting for voting rights and increasing voter turnout."

One issue that got particular attention, according to Ott, was a series of racial harassment incidents at a General Motors transmission plant in Toledo. Nine UAW members at the plant have taken legal action against GM after

nooses and 'Whites-Only' signs were posted near bathrooms there.

"Stopping discrimination in the workplace is one thing that Civil and Human Rights committees at union locals are gearing up for in light of these attacks on our coworkers," says Ott.

The International UAW issued the following statement on the racial harassment in Ohio: "No UAW member should ever feel the sting of racism in the workplace.

"The UAW has long believed as part of our core values that discrimination has no place in the workplace. We have created a series of avenues that allow our members to address discrimination, including through our civil rights committees, UAW Constitutional procedures, the grievance process and other workplace mechanisms. But the fact is, even in 2018, there are still members who are touched by unacceptable behavior. We take this seriously and our goal is to make all members feel safe and welcome in their workplace, always."



Members of UAW Local 249 Veteran's and Motorcycle Committees gather together to help distribute \$250,000 worth of clothing donated by Oldham Auctions. One of the recipients was the nonprofit Veterans Community Project. Photo by Don Lehman.

Heartwarming holiday gifts for veterans

By Chrissy Kline

A serendipitous chain of events led the UAW Local 249 Veteran's Committee to deliver holiday cheer and Christmas spirit to veterans in need in the form of \$250,000 worth of brand-new clothing. The clothing, originating from the closure of Wentworth Military Academy, was contracted to be auctioned off by Oldham Auctions but none of the items were selling well. Once members of UAW Local 249 caught wind of this they contacted Brody Oldham about donating these clothes to local veterans.

After Oldham received permission to donate the goods an overwhelmingly full truck found its way to the Local 249 union hall. Dave Grant, chairperson of the Veteran's Committee of Local 249 said "As we unloaded, it seemed like the truck filled itself back up. There was so much more than we could have imagined. Boxes upon boxes kept falling out, filled with brand new clothes." After finally unloading the truck it was time to sort through the boxes and inventory what was received as they reached out to local organizations with the intent of delivering donations.

The final inventory of clothing contained everything from flip-flops to full dress suits, including hats, gloves and outerwear. The clothing was military styled but had no emblems or insignia on them, so they appeared to be more like business or dress clothes. Twenty of the trench coats were delivered to the VA hospital in Kansas City. The rest of the inventory was delivered via a six vehicle caravan of volunteers from both Local 249's Veteran's and Motorcycle Committees on a blustery winter day to an organization called Veterans Community Project or "VCP."

Most of the clothing went for their not for profit clothing storefront and the rest was to help veterans in the community. This allows veterans who have job interviews to get dress shirts, suits or shoes easily as well as those who are struggling with more basic needs such as to be clothed and warm.

In an interview regarding how it felt to be part of such an incredible experience Grant, a veteran himself, stated "It's a feeling I haven't felt in a long time. I had goosebumps all day. It felt so good to finally be able to actively help our vets. I feel like they are a forgotten part of our society, words cannot explain how it felt. There was an overall sense of pride in the air that day. In fact, I have to say it is probably one of my proudest moments as a member of this union. It set the bar high for this coming year. I just hope we can live up to that same measure or exceed it. There is no going back down."

This generous gift of a quarter million dollars of clothing came on the heels of a Thanksgiving dinner served to more than 125 veterans at St. Michaels Veteran's home by members of our standing committees.

These events have built a momentum that Grant hopes will propel them forward into the coming year. When asked what 2019 had in store for the Veteran's Committee, Grant said their plan is to "make money to put back into the community and honor those who have served our country in any way possible."

Our next event will be on Valentine's Day as we deliver cards and money to veterans at the KC VA and St. Michaels veteran's home." With that in mind, stay tuned in the coming weeks for raffles, service events and other opportunities to help our Local 249 committees give back to our surrounding communities.

KCAP Stamping expansion

By Jim Fisher

The Transit System will remain on a 5x10 schedule for both shifts and the Truck System will remain on a three crew pattern. At this time neither System has any down weeks or Super Production Days scheduled.

Expansion and investment are a large piece of our long term success as the best facility in the Ford system. As we have been discussing for several months the Stamping Plant expansion is a large part of our success moving forward. Phase one of the Stamping Plant expansion has been completed and our new work stations became operational on January 22nd.

There is also a construction project going on in the Transit MSC Center as they are adding two more dock doors for future parts being moved back to KCAP to be sorted by our members. The plant just recently completed a \$1,000,000 upgrade to the Transit Tire Shop and we have been informed that the Transit Body Shop will be receiving a \$4,000,000 upgrade.

While other plants in North America struggle with future product commitments and outsourcing, these investments to our plant are a direct reflection of our members hard work and dedication.

As promised, and thanks to our

UAW Health & Safety team, construction in the north parking lot has begun to correct the drainage issue at the turnstiles. This is to correct the ponding issues so our members don't have to walk through high water or ice.

We have notified the company of several potholes within the parking lots and the bridge leading to Truck Body and Paint shops. As long as the weather will cooperate we plan to have these addressed as soon as possible.

As everyone should know, our quality is what keeps us working. If we build a vehicle that is not dependable we will lose customers. If we lose customers none of us will have a job.

It seems it is becoming a practice of the management on the floor to instruct our inspectors not to report defects found, or instructing Team Leaders and Repairmen to buy off units that have not been repaired yet and sending them off to the dealerships. This cannot be allowed.

Quality is everyone's responsibility. If you are asked by management to do this we ask you to report this to



Local 249 Bargaining Chair Jim Fisher reports on the progress of the Stamping plant addition at the Jan. 13 membership meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

our Quality Hotline at (816) 414-5588. If possible include the member of management and the unit number so the issue can be addressed.

In the January union meeting the membership approved Local 249 sending 67 National Contract Proposals to the International Union for consideration. There was a wide range of proposals from the use of temporary

workers, pay scale for in progression workers, break time, raises for legacy workers, language over a 4x10 schedule, extension of family members for bereavement, increase in health benefits and increases for retirees. I would like to thank our Bargaining Committee for their hard work in getting these ready and sent up north in a timely manner.

Member Spotlight

Cameron Pennington is our Member Spotlight for the month of January. Cameron started working for Ford in July of 2013. He was hired in on the Truck Side before he became a Team Leader in Transit Chassis. Cameron's future goal with Ford is to work in the Skilled Trades Apprenticeship Program, where he is currently on the list. Cameron is also involved with the UAW Local 249 union. He is the Co-Chair of the Member to Member Committee.

Cameron was born and raised in Kansas City, Kansas. He comes from a very large family spanning over six states. After Cameron graduated high school he enlisted with the United States Army, as an Electronics Warfare Interceptor, where he served four years.

Cameron has been married to his wife for two and a half years. They have a nineteen month old son and wish to have one or two more children. They attend Roswell Church of Christ in Kansas City, Kansas. Their favorite family outing is a visit to the zoo on a beautiful day. His son really likes to go to the zoo.

Some of the things Cameron enjoys doing are playing recreational sports like softball and football, as well as shooting pool. When Cameron really wants to release stress and keep his senses sharp, he enjoys taking a few guns to the gun range. Boom, this is Cameron Pennington. — By Jo Meneses



Connect to your MyFordBenefits Account

To reset your login credentials the first time you go to myfordbenefits.com after January 2, 2019:

1. Click New User? below the Log On button
2. On the next screen, enter the last four digits of your Social Security number and your birth date. Click Continue
3. On the Enter Your Password screen, type the temporary myfordbenefits.com password that was mailed to you in mid-December. Then click the Log On button.
4. Create your new User ID, password and PIN as follows:
 - Ford Benefits User ID. Eight to 20 characters consisting of letters or numbers; your user ID is not case sensitive.
 - Permanent Ford Benefits Password. Eight to 20 characters consisting of letters or numbers, spaces and special characters. Your password is case sensitive and must contain three or four items: Upper case letter, lower case letter, number, special character.
 - NESC PIN (for calls only). Six to 20 characters consisting of numbers only. You'll need to use a temporary NESC PIN, which you received in mid-December.
5. Select and answer security questions for fast resets in case you forget your Ford Benefits User ID or Password in the future.

After completing these steps, you'll use your new Ford Benefits User ID and Ford Benefits Password to sign in to myfordbenefits.com from outside the Ford network. Any time you're inside the network, you'll automatically be signed in.

Questions? Contact the NESC at 1-800-248-4444 between 9 am and 9 pm ET, Monday - Friday

Mo. legislature raises middle finger to voters

By Jason Starr

Missouri voters overwhelmingly approved the Clean Missouri constitutional amendment last November to do what legislators have refused to do for years. Clean up Missouri's notoriously dirty politics. Now the legislature is circling its wagons and drawing up plans to overrule the voters who put them in office.

Initiative 1, placed on the ballot by a successful citizen's petition drive, would end gerrymandering — the manipulation of the boundaries of electoral districts to favor one party.

It creates a new position of non-partisan state demographer who would propose maps to commissioners that reflect the parties' share of the statewide vote in previous elections.

Clean Missouri also limits the influence of lobbyists by prohibiting lawmakers from accepting gifts worth more than \$5. And it requires lawmakers to wait two years after the end of their last term before becoming a lobbyist.

Clean Missouri makes lawmakers subject to the state open-records law and prohibits legislative candidates from raising political money on state property.

It places campaign contribution limits on legislative candidates. It would be lowered slightly, from the current \$2,600 for all candidates to \$2,500 for Senate candidates and \$2,000 for House candidates.

Sunshine laws — like the open records provisions in the Clean Missouri Amendment — ensure government activities are conducted in an open and

ethical nature. This allows members of the public to learn about and request access to public records pertaining to government activities. They are designed to limit corruption and increase public trust through transparency.

The sunshine provisions of the voter approved changes to the Missouri Constitution go a long way to limiting the influence of big money — much of it from out of state — in state politics and restoring trust in state government.

Unfortunately, Missouri legislators have become addicted to big money. The political corruption that comes with big money requires secrecy, so in January, the Republican majority voted to keep their records secret from the voters who put them in office.

As Tony Messenger wrote in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, "House Republicans raised their collective middle fingers and pointed them at voters."

A similar contempt for the will of the voters was expressed by Sen. Eric Burlison, who pre-filed a right-to-work bill rejected by an overwhelming margin by voters in November.

Workers can already opt out of full union membership and pay only for the cost of collective bargaining with an em-



Local 249 President Jason Starr chaired the monthly membership meeting Jan. 13 at the union hall. Photo by Don Lehman.

ployer. But the right-to-work bill filed by Burlison would require unions to provide union representation at no cost to those who refuse to pay union dues.

"I believe this is the right issue not because it's popular, but because it's the right issue," Burlison told St. Louis Public Radio in December "It's morally the right thing to do. Issues that I hold dear in that regard should not change based the vote of the people."

Burlison has also sponsored legislation that would make it more difficult for citizens to have control of their own government by requiring more signatures on initiative petitions. His

proposed bill would also require that a proposed constitutional amendment receive two-thirds of the vote before it's enacted.

A number of other Republican lawmakers have proposed similar measures.

The voters clearly expressed their will by voting for Clean Missouri, raising the minimum wage and against right to work in Missouri, but they elected candidates who oppose them on all three issues. If voters want to control their own government, they will have to vote for different candidates in 2020.



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 learn about changes to vision plan

By Natalie Wood

Retirees Benefit Rep Steve Hibbs spoke about the changes in our vision plan from SVS to Davis Vision. The change took place on January 1. Hibbs encouraged our retirees to contact the NESC for matters concerning address changes or TESPHE concerns. Hibbs said that by updating your pin number and password, it will make it easier for the Benefit Reps to assist you when you call on them. Hibbs thanked Tanya Moore our Blue Cross/Blue Shield representative for providing us with pocket calendars and for attending our meetings to update us on any changes with BC/BS.

At our December meeting Mel Thompson said Silver Sneakers are offered to our retirees. Some companies are discontinuing this program. This program is open to our UAW retirees that are eligible.

Larry Rupp reported at the December meeting on the success of the CPR class that was held after our November meeting. The defibrillator has not been delivered to the union hall as of yet but we hope to receive one by January. Rupp went on to say an additional CPR class will be held after our March or April retirees meeting.

The contract proposals were well received and Rupp thanked the membership for participating.

Clayton Hunter-Salvation Army rep reported that our UAW active members did a gate collection. They collected over \$9,000. Ford Motor Company matched that by donating \$10,000. This money will be used in children shelters, for basic hygiene needs and much more. Hunter went on to thank UAW-Ford for

the three Transit vans that were donated to the Salvation Army.

Frosty Nelson from Local 93 thanked the membership for allowing them to use our union hall to conduct their meetings. Some special guests from Local 31 were Bobbie Bennett and Mary Green. Cecil Vaughan, from the Local 710 Area Council and Chairman Jim Posey attended our December meeting.

Mel Thompson spoke on the silent auction for a quilt donated from summer school. Starting bid is \$250. It is handmade and we hope to have it on display soon. Mel also reported at our January meeting that the Salvation Army sent Local 249 and Ford a thank you letter for the \$19,000 and the three Transit vans. Mel Thompson reported that there is a food pantry on our property that is open to the public and our members. Feel free to donate and or take what you need from this pantry.

Mel Thompson stated that on our 50/50 raffle tickets that we purchase at the beginning of our meeting will



Retiree Chair Mel Thompson purchases a raffle ticket at the Jan. 16 Retiree Meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

have a cut off time of 10:45. Red tickets can be purchased up until the actual drawing.

Congratulations to our November retiree Ronald L. Cohron and our December retiree Brent S. Spicer. Please join us at our future retirees meetings.

Service Officer William Parker announced the November deaths: William L. Jenkins, Howard L. Kelly, Shirley McChesney, Russell B. Tidwell and Roy O. Wise. Gerald Wilson announced at our December death of Tammy L. Redwine. Continue to pray for these families.

Lori Marin our Family Auxiliary Vice-Chair led us in song for the six birthdays and three anniversaries for the month of December. Larry and Sandra Engler have married 36 years, Robert and Young Kim have been married 52 years and Bob and Pauline Hund have been married 67 years. For the month of January we had eight

birthdays and one anniversary. Glenn and Mary Sanders have been married 53 years. Congratulations to each couple and God bless you all.

Bingo will be held on the third Friday on the month at 11:00am at Local 249. Please bring a snack to share and a white elephant gift.

Our next Retirees meeting is Wednesday February 20, 2019 starting at 10:30. Please bring a side dish or dessert.

UAW Local 249 retirees hope that all had a wonderful holiday and a safe New Year.

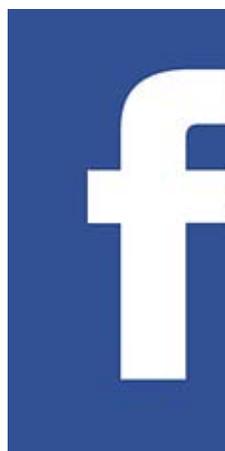
There were 93 people at our December 19th 2018 retirees meeting and 59 people at our January 16th meeting. There is always room for more. Won't you join us for our February 20th, 2019 meeting? We welcome all retirees to join us for information and fellowship.



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Local 249 members joined laid off federal workers in Kansas City Jan. 12 to protest the government shutdown. Photo by Gary Thomas.



UAW Local 249 Community Service Committee members Bill Cole and Sadie Bass handed out coats to kids at Hartman Elementary School. This was the first year that the local was able to source made in America coats by a Michigan company, All USA Clothing. Photo by Don Lehman.

Coats for kids - American style

By Gwen Starkey

When the first frosty little snowflakes are falling all around, all kids want to do is catch them before they hit the ground. For some kids, it's an activity viewed from inside as they don't have warm winter gear to suit up in to play outside. No gloves to throw a snowball, no hat to warm their ears and if they are lucky, they might have last year's coat, if it still fits, or a hand me down.

UAW Local 249 Community Services Committee stepped up again this year with a new twist on their annual Coats for Kids campaign; they went with a made in the USA theme by purchasing all their winter apparel from All USA Clothing. A Michigan based company that specializes in the finest quality. Their motto is "We don't just say "Buy American," We shout "BUY AMERICAN!" from the rooftops! And we believe the best way to support our great country is to support our American made manufacturers who make the world's best products and wear them with pride."

UAW Local 249's Community Services Committee chairpersoned by Kim Rowland kicked off this year's Coats for Kids campaign on Dec. 20 delivering

167 brand new made in the USA coats to Hartman Elementary School in the Kansas City Missouri School District. It was a little later in the season than usual because this was the first year they actually had all the coats custom made. Rowland has been trying for years to find a USA manufacturer when she came across All USA Clothing's Cary Heller. "It was a great day and a day that I have been looking forward to forever," Rowland said. We've always wanted to be able to give out made in the USA coats and this year it just all came together. It was a match made in heaven."

The coats finally arrived and the committee jumped into action sorting and separating by size and gender. The kids funneled through

and aweing on their selections. Girls choose from different colored cuffs and waistbands on puffer coats while boys picked out a hooded carhart type of coat in black or blue. Each coat had a tag inside that said donated by UAW Local 249 with a special place for the kids to write their names on it.

"Getting our name out in the community, showing that we care," Rowland said, maybe someday, hopefully those kids and their families will look at those coats and remember that the UAW helped them out one time and maybe we will get support from our community in times when we need it."

They had one setback on that day that was as Rowland called it "sucky". "There were some children whose parents neglected to turn in their coat slips that we ordered our coats from and those kids didn't receive a coat that day," she said. That broke my heart and our committee has come up with a plan for this next year. This will not happen again. We will make sure that everyone gets a coat and that no one

is turned away."

"It was an awesome day," Rowland said. I know I say this every year but I look forward to this day. There is nothing more fulfilling than when you hand a kid a coat and they are grinning ear to ear and saying thank you with big hugs and smiles."

"A big shout out and thank you to Cary Heller and All USA Clothing. I know it was a headache for him, but he was so great," Rowland said. I want to thank all of our brothers and sisters at UAW Local 249."

"We couldn't reach out to the community and serve them the way that we do if it wasn't for the support of our membership and our appointed and elected officials. Buying the food and pop at the union meetings, purchasing raffle tickets, attending our various events that we sponsor, these are the things that allow us to do what we do. This is where your money goes and if you would like to be a part of these events please contact the hall. We would love to have you join us. The more the merrier."