

FIRST LOCAL NEWS

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

July 2019



**Building dreams
the UAW way | p5**

**Local 249 conducts
strike training | p8**

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



Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Jefferson City, MO
Permit No. 303

UAW Local 249 members Gina Cervantes, left to right, and Terri Hall participated in the recent Habitat for Humanity Women's Build project. The annual event held on June 7 provides the opportunity for women to take a proactive step in serving their communities. Photo by Don Lehman.



Ties and Tiaras, the annual Local 249 Father Daughter Dance sponsored by the Women's Committee, held June 22, was a great success. Photo by Don Lehman.



Missouri State Rep. Mark Ellebracht and State Sen. Lauren Arthur, judges of the Local 249 Charlie Suffridge Scholarship Contest, presented the awards at the June Membership Meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.



Members of the Veterans Committees of Local 249 and Local 31 distributed clothing and personal hygiene items to homeless veterans at the Kansas City Veterans Stand Down on June 7. Photo by Don Lehman.

First Local News

Published monthly with combined issues in December-January and June-July by UAW Local 249. Free to members and retirees of UAW Local 249. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the UAW or Local 249. Member of the Local Union Communication Association (LUCA).

Editor Pat Hayes

Reporters Chrissy Kline and Gwen Starkey
Photographer Don Lehman

UAW Local 249

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

Officers of Local 249

President Jason Starr
1st Vice President Tony Renfro
2nd Vice President Tom Carr
Recording Secretary Shirley Mata
Financial Secretary Dana Davidson
Treasurer Chrissy Kline
Trustees Ed Scaggs, Connie Thomas, Sade Ott
Sergeant at Arms Leon Allen
Guide Jeremy Fue
Bargaining Chair Jim Fisher
Bargaining Committee Steve Chorbak, Dean Freed and Don Picard
Skilled Trades Bargaining Committee Member Ron Pangborn
Parts Depot Bargaining Chair Dave Rogers
Nurse's Bargaining Chair Cathy Koogler
Team Solutions Bargaining Chair David Norris
Retiree Representative Larry Rupp

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

UAW-Ford Joint Programs

Apprentice Training

Cortez Bradley 816-459-2060

Benefits

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

Employee Involvement

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

Employee Support Services

Kenny Alexander 816-459-1226

Health and Safety

Ed Samborski 816-459-1210 • Terry Tharp 816-459-1407
Ulysses Bales 816-459-1605 • Joe Camper 816-459-5559
Dave Sambol 816-459-1223

Quality

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

Job Sourcing and Production Standards

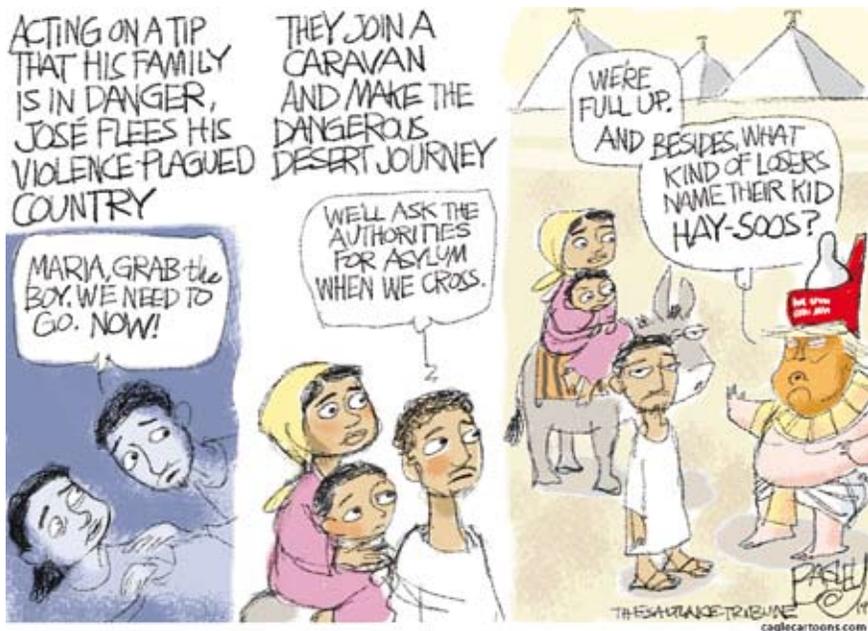
Jim Ryan and Todd Wyse 816-459-1466

Helpful Numbers

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

Visit Local 249 on the web at www.local249.org
Like Local 249 on Facebook www.facebook.com/local249
Follow us on Twitter @UAWLocal249





UAW calls for labor law changes after VW Chattanooga organizing campaign

The UAW today called on Congress to take a comprehensive look at the country's labor laws and NLRB rules that made it almost impossible for Volkswagen workers to form a union.

"VW workers endured a system where even when they voted, the company refused to bargain," said Brian Rothenberg, spokesman for the UAW. "Clearly Volkswagen was able to delay bargaining with maintenance and ultimately this vote among all production and maintenance workers through legal games until they could undermine the vote."

"Our labor laws are broken," said Rothenberg. "Workers should not have to endure threats and intimidation in order to obtain the right to collectively bargain. The law doesn't serve workers, it caters to clever lawyers who are able to manipulate the NLRB process."

Tracy Romero, UAW organizing director, said she was proud of the Chattanooga Volkswagen workers in the face of the fear they endured.

"The Company ran a brutal campaign of fear and misinformation," said Romero. Fear of the loss of the plant; fear of their participation in the union effort; fear through misinformation about the UAW; fear about current benefits in contract negotiations. Over a period of nine weeks – an unprecedented length of time due to legal gamesmanship – Volkswagen was able to break the will of enough workers to destroy their majority."

Romero indicated that the UAW intends to ask for the help of VW labor leaders in Europe to help protect Chat-

tanooga workers from any retaliation. "Chattanooga workers deserve the right to vote and deserve the right to be treated fairly and we will hold Wolfsburg to that."

While political interference and right-wing group expenditures did contribute to the loss, Rothenberg said the current state of American labor laws particularly made the Volkswagen effort difficult.

"Here you have maintenance workers who voted for a contract and Volkswagen just refused to follow the law and bargain. They insisted that maintenance and production vote together. So, three years later maintenance and production ask to vote and VW stands in their way," said Rothenberg. "This is a system designed to benefit corporate lawyers not protect worker rights."

By law, VW workers will have to wait one year before seeking another election. "Ultimately this has always been about Chattanooga workers who are the only VW workers in the world without a union," said Chattanooga UAW Local 42 Chairman Steve Cochran. "If people wonder why the middle class is disappearing in this country, it's because it is nearly impossible for workers to get access to collective bargaining."

"If people wonder why the middle class is disappearing in this country, it's because it is nearly impossible for workers to get access to collective bargaining."

Labor News From the World Wide Web

The Picket Line

GM to invest \$20 million in Arlington Plant

General Motors announced Monday an investment of over \$20 million in the Arlington, Texas assembly plant that employs 4,500 members.

Arlington Assembly—first opened in 1954—is the sole producer of the Chevrolet Tahoe and Suburban, GMC Yukon and Yukon XL, and the Cadillac Escalade.

GM has invested more than \$1.4 billion in Arlington Assembly since 2015 to build a new paint shop and for upgrades to the body shop and general assembly area.

"Under the outstanding leadership of UAW Region 5 Director Vance Pearson, the dedicated membership at UAW Local 276 continues to build world-class SUVs in Arlington, Texas. The UAW continues to commend GM for making investments in U.S. locations. We believe that building a product where you sell is good for our members, their families, our communities and all of America. We hope to see more investments in the future at other General Motors facilities throughout our country," said Terry Dittes, Vice President of the UAW GM Department.

Construction on the enhancements is set to be completed next year. — UAW

UAW testifies on emissions rollback

On Thursday, UAW Legislative Director Josh Nassar testified in front of the Congressional Energy and Commerce Committee, in opposition to new rules governing automotive emissions standards. The Trump administration plans to freeze fuel economy standards at the levels for 2020 models, rather than increasing requirements through 2025 as previously planned.

Nassar included in his testimony a letter from 17 major automotive manufacturers who warned that these rule changes would create uncertainty in the American automotive industry, leading to expensive legal battles and hampering the industry's ability to invest in innovation. Nassar pointed out the impact this instability would have on UAW members and retirees: "No other membership organization in the United States is more directly affected by the health and stability of the domestic auto manufacturing industry than UAW members and retirees. The majority of our members and retirees work in or have retired from the auto industry and are therefore directly impacted by fuel economy and clean car standards."

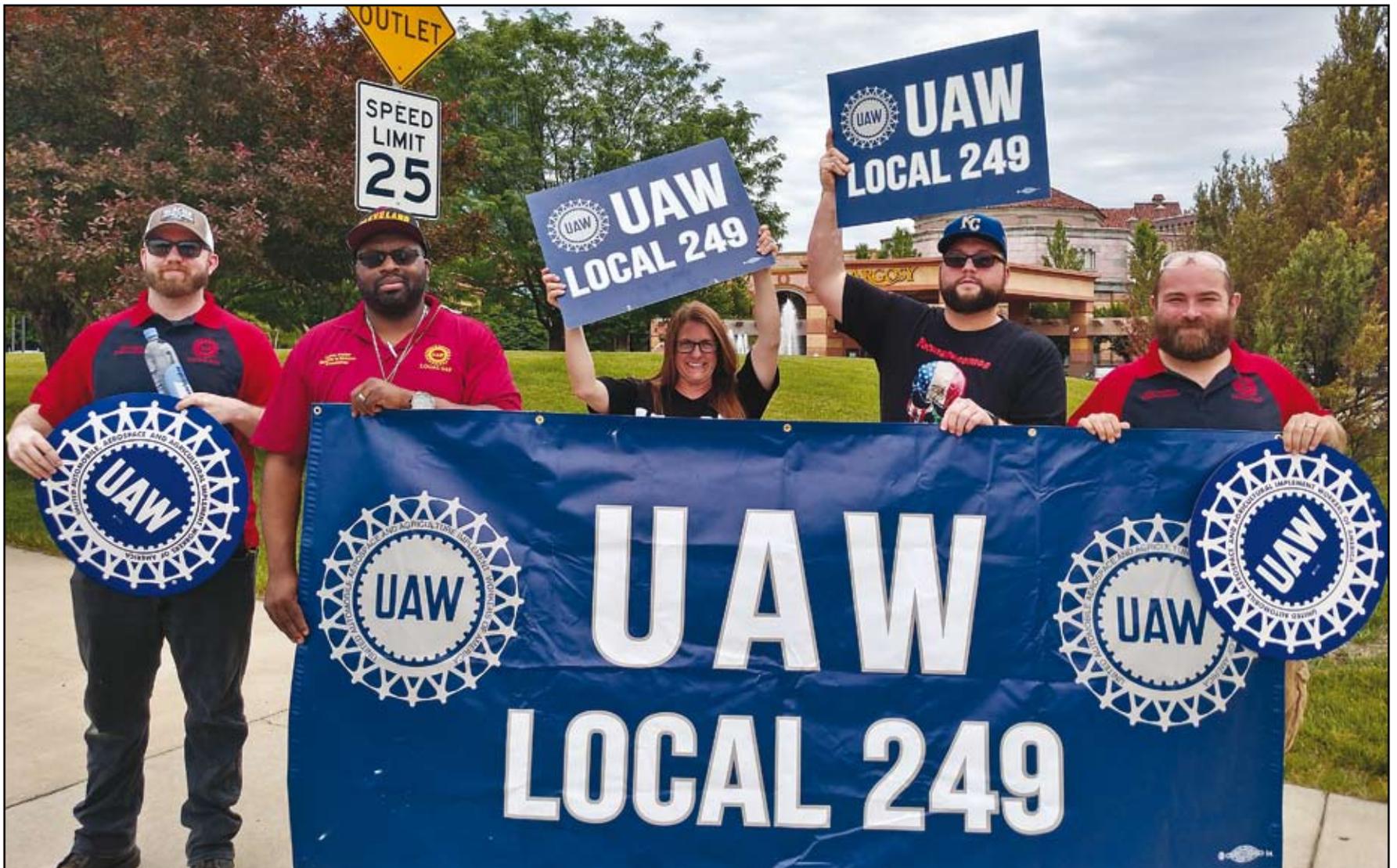
Nassar went on to discuss the vital role emissions standards play in combatting climate change and the importance of keeping American companies at the forefront of automotive innovation. He says, "Done right, emissions and fuel efficiency standards can continue to be good for the environment, American workers, U.S. manufacturing and the economy." — UAW

AFL-CIO calls for better NAFTA deal

"The North American Free Trade Agreement has been nothing short of a disaster for working people. For a quarter-century, Michigianians have watched as corporations shuttered plants, raided pensions and steadily eroded communities that had come to embody the promise of the American Dream. NAFTA is a disaster. But it was no accident. Politicians and corporate executives saw trade as a way to further tilt the economy in their favor. They sold out jobs and livelihoods here at home and sacrificed workers' rights abroad. Nothing was off limits so long as they could sniff out fatter profit margins."

There is nothing in the New NAFTA, says AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka "to address outsourcing. It's a repeat of the old NAFTA and fails to stop the hemorrhaging of U.S. and Canadian jobs to Mexico. It doesn't prevent corporations like General Motors from closing down plants and hurting workers and communities up and down the supply chain from Ohio to Ontario and beyond.

"The new NAFTA also has no effective way to enforce its rules. It literally allows a party accused of violations to stop a settlement panel. It'd be like giving an accused thief the right to shut down his own trial." — AFL-CIO Now Blog



Local 249 and 31 activists brought a message of solidarity to dealers at the Argosy Casino in Riverside June 6-7 as dealers there voted 2-1 to join the UAW. It's the first group of dealers to win union recognition in Missouri.

Argosy Casino dealers vote to join UAW

By Pat Hayes

Dealers at the Argosy Casino in Riverside voted overwhelmingly to be represented by UAW Local 710 in an organizing election held June 6-7. The vote represents the first union organizing victory at a casino in Missouri according to Local 710 President Jeff Schweedler.

Low pay and difficult work schedules drove the 76-34 vote in favor of the union. New dealers make just \$4.50 an hour and must rely on tips. Even experienced dealers who've been on the job for many years make just \$6.50.

Short staffing at the casino has forced the dealers to work long hours. The lack of good benefits and the desire for better health insurance were also motivating factors in the vote according to Schweedler.

Now that the organizing drive has ended in victory for the dealers, a union bargaining committee will be selected from casino members. Once the bargaining committee is in place, negotiations for a contract will begin.

UAW represented casino work-

ers in other states have negotiated increases in wages through bonuses, lump sums and/or base rate increases. These newly organized workers have maintained or improved their benefits and working conditions. Their newly negotiated contracts guarantee year over year wage increases leading to higher base wage rates and improved working conditions.

Activists from UAW Locals 249 and 31 helped build solidarity with the Argosy dealers in the days before the vote.

"Having Local 249 and Local 31 was huge," says Schweedler. "When I called Local 31 President Dan Kindlebinder and Local 249 President Jason Starr, there was no hesitation. They were there for us."

More than 10,000 gaming industry workers across nine states are members of the UAW, including Connecticut, Maryland, Florida, Indiana, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, Ohio and Rhode Island.

The organizing victory in Kansas City comes on the heels of a UAW organizing victory for 2,600 dealers at Foxwoods Resort Casino in Connecticut. The tribal-owned facility is

the largest casino in the world and the state's largest private employer.

"I'm really proud of the way Local 249 members turned out to help their brothers and sisters organize at Argosy," says Local 249 President Jason Starr. "Our members have played an important role building the UAW here at Argosy and at Challenger. This shows just how important union solidarity is."



UAW members welcomed dealers at Argosy Casino in Riverside to the union family.



UAW Local 249 ladies showed up in force on June 7 for Habitat for Humanity's annual Women's Build project. Hard work paid off as they framed and constructed walls right alongside future homeowners. Photo by Don Lehman.

Building dreams the UAW way

By Gwen Starkey

What do you get when you bring together a dozen or so sassy UAW Local 249 women volunteers to a Habitat for Humanity Women's Build job site? You get a home built to withstand the test of time. The women of UAW Local 249 build more than trucks and vans; they help build dreams, the kind that can change lives.

While Mother Nature might have put a damper on the projects Mother's Day time line by dropping down massive amounts of rain, UAW women persevered and in the heat of a June afternoon managed to move lumber, raise walls and nail up the plywood sheathing needed to construct the main living areas of the new home.

A home for a family that might not otherwise have an affordable and safe place to live. That's what Habitat for Humanity is all about; leaving our community better than we found it. These Women Build events provide the opportunity for women to take a proactive step in serving our communities. It's not about leaving men out; it's about empowering women.

UAW Local 249's Community Services Committee headed by Kim Rowland is quite active in our community and has worked with Habitat for years. "The work that Habitat for Humanity does in our community is so important," Rowland said. "They create a path to homeownership for families that builds pride and self-confidence. By doing this, they revitalize and help our community reclaim neighborhoods

by booting out the criminal element, curbing the violence and creating safe places for our children to play and to go to school. Add in some good paying jobs that can support a family, grocery stores that provide fresh fruit and vegetables and you get a community, a place to call home."

This year's UAW Local 249 Women Build volunteers were Melody Decoudres, Connie Edwards, Amanda Palmer, Terri Hall, Sadie Bass, Shauncei Gray, Betty Arns, Patty Gillette, Jacque Childs, and Gina Cervantes. According to Habitat's Volunteer Project Director Dana Bass, Women Build homes are much better built because women don't mind asking for instructions or help.

"This was my first year doing the Women's Build with Habitat for Humanity and let me just say I will definitely be doing it every year from now on," Shauncei Gray said. Gray, who works the starter install job on transit chassis dayshift, has been at Ford for five years. She decided to become active in the union by joining the Community Services Committee. "I grew up in a union household and I know the

importance of being involved," Gray said. "I want to be the change. I want to help our union become stronger and increase the solidarity here at Local 249. There's no better way to do that than to be involved."

Gray said she chose the Women's Build event because she enjoys helping others and believes in the process. "The people who these homes go to have worked so hard to get through this program and be able to buy their own home," Gray said. "Everyone deserves a chance in life, no matter where you come from or where you're going, and for me to be able to help them get their beautiful new home fit for their family is truly a blessing. Sure, I did just one day of hard work, but these families are doing so much more than that and I applaud them for making wonderful moves in their lives."

UAW Local 249's Consumer Affairs Committee member Connie Edwards also stepped outside the box and signed up to learn the details that go into constructing a house. "It was a wonderful first time experience," she said. "I have befriended some amazing people and had an experience that will last a lifetime."

It's the 48th anniversary for Habitat in the Kansas City area and over that time, they have built or renovated over 700 homes. Typically, it takes three to four months from ground breaking to move in depending on the weather.

The average size home, depending on lot and surrounding area homes, is usually 3-4 bedrooms with a basement and when room allows, a one-car garage. Families receive an interest free 30-year mortgage with payments averaging \$550-\$600 including taxes and insurance.

Though the Habitat neighborhoods are comprised largely of women and children, the population most likely to be affected by poor living conditions, there are single men in the program as well. During this build, Habitat had three future homeowners, Kristal, Takeria and Eduardo, helping on the job site putting in part of their 350 sweat equity hours, one of the requirements for homeownership. Homeowners must also take education and finance classes and must reside in their homes for five years. After that time, the home is theirs.

"It's an awesome program," Dana Bass said. "The pleasure that I get from doing this is immeasurable. Everyone that comes out for Habitat for Humanity really comes out because they want to do something good for our community. I get to see all the good in people. It's very rewarding. We have groups of regular routine volunteers that come out every single week and we have volunteers that have been at this for over 30 years. It's a huge benefit to Habitat and it shows what it means to people to get involved with our mission."

Excerpts from the Collective Bargaining Resolution approved by delegates to the UAW Special Bargaining Convention in Detroit

Key Issues in Bargaining

The Opioid Crisis and Addiction in the Workplace

Excerpted from the Collective Bargaining Resolution approved at the UAW Special Bargaining Convention held March 11-13 in Detroit. The resolution was adopted to guide union negotiators in contract talks over the next four years. Contract talks with Ford, GM and FCA will begin soon. The deadline for a new contract is Sept. 15.

Opioid addiction is a shockingly common problem, and it can affect anyone, including highly functioning and successful workers. Addiction takes a massive toll on workers, their families, communities, and our society. Chemical dependence can impact an employee's job performance and threaten the safety and well-being of both the employee and their co-workers. Supporting workers to get treatment is not only right for them, it is also right for the company, saving money in the long term. Regrettably, many employers do not recognize addiction as a common illness that affects a wide array of people. It is often treated with judgment and bias. However, addiction is a disease like any other and should be treated as such.

Opioid abuse, both prescription and illicit, was involved in more than 35,000 deaths in 2015 and increased to nearly 64,000 deaths in 2016. There

are now more deaths from drugs, two-thirds of which are opioid related, than from car accidents or gun violence in the U.S. annually. Clearly opioid addiction is a societal crisis. The estimated cost to the economy of this crisis is \$400 billion per year, most of that in the workplace.

In the past 15 years, sales of prescription opioids have nearly quadrupled, with approximately 1 in 3 Americans having a prescription for an opioid. A National Survey on Drug Use and Health found that 4.3 million Americans engage in nonmedical use of an opioid each month. In industries where workers have physically demanding jobs, perform repetitive

motions, or spend long stretches of time on their feet, opioid abuse rates are even higher. Contractual language is needed to address on-going opioid abuse. Therefore, we will seek:

- The creation of "Optimal Care Plans" through the expansion of employer funded, Union administered Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) for the prevention of dependency and 39 addiction caused by chronic use of opioids or other potentially addicting chemicals.

- Increased education and awareness related to the complexities of opioid and other substance abuse addictions for workers and their families.

- Enhanced and expanded treatment programs.

- Treatment, rather than punishment, for workers with addiction.

- Continually updated training for entire worksite populations, including supervisor training.

- The inclusion of appropriate UAW representatives in developing objective written workplace policies related to addressing, treating, or testing formats that are confidential medical information.

- Written policies, where necessary, that are non-punitive and administered in a manner consistent with labor contracts and both state and federal law.





The UAW Local 249 Kansas City Assembly Plant fitness center has been expanded in both size and equipment selection. Upgrades were made to the facilities with televisions and flooring, exercise machine pads were reupholstered and brand new cardio, cable and weight machines were installed. Come and see for yourself. Photo by Don Lehman.

Health is wealth: Invest in yourself

By Chrissy Kline

The UAW Local 249 fitness center receives a facelift as thousands of dollars are invested in a new expansion including updated flooring, equipment and televisions. On weekdays the center is open 22 hours a day and instructors are available to help you reach your health and fitness goals.

"This has been a goal from when I started," said Denise Cavlovic who has worked at the facility for many years. "I am proud of it for those who kept coming when it was smaller with less equipment and helped to show a need for the facility to help us get where we are now." Members have shared that they feel appreciated and invested in with the company spending the funds to upgrade the facility.

What was once a very small crowded room with a few weight benches is now open and spacious, with padded flooring and several benches surrounded by dumbbells. One can find new Hammer plate leg equipment such as a hack squat, seated calf raise machine and seated leg press. There are two barbell squat racks, however there is no

Olympic lifting permitted, and a weight limit of 215 pounds on the barbell. This is for the safety of all members. The trainers can help find other exercises to work similar muscles.

The center also received multi station Cybex cable towers that can perform many exercises including lat pull downs, low cable rows, assisted dip machine and more. The weight machines are not the only upgrades the center has seen. There are also new recumbent bikes, cross trainers and ellipticals, and a step mill.

Services offered range from weight loss to weight gain, preventative exercises including flexibility and mobility to prevent injury or improve performance in other areas of health, assistance with old injuries, basic

nutrition or even in preparing for a 5k or Warrior Dash. There are three full-time trainers on staff with degrees in exercise science and several part time employees to meet the needs of weekend members.

To become a member of the KCAP UAW Local 249 fitness center you can call 816-459-1945 and set up an appointment with a trainer who will perform a wellness evaluation and provide you with a fitness center orientation. The trainers request that you bring workout clothes and allow approximately 30 minutes for your appointment.

During this time the fitness instructor will provide you with a membership packet to complete and check your resting heart rate, blood pressure, body composition measurements and weight. This is all to help you track your results and progress as you go along! After this is completed you will then get a tour of the facility and if you so choose, assistance on setting up an exercise program.

If you continue to use the facilities your membership will remain active, if you do not visit during the next year you will have to redo your assessment to help keep your goals up to date. The instructors place great emphasis on the health and safety of everyone who uses the fitness center and want to make sure everyone knows how to use the machinery properly and that no one is injured due to improper usage or lack of education.

The schedule for the fitness center is as follows: Monday through Friday the center is open from 9:00am to 7:00am the following morning, Saturdays from 10:30am to 6:30pm and Sundays from 2:00pm to 5:30pm. The hours are set up to accommodate the different shifts within the plant while still having instructors available for assistance.

In an industry that takes a toll on our bodies it is important to remember that health is real wealth. Invest in yourself and make an appointment with a fitness instructor today.



Representatives from International and regional staff met with 60 members of UAW Local 249 elected and appointed leadership to teach strike training. Jason Starr, left to right, Zenia Wilson, Jim Fisher and Bill Stephen educated those in attendance on June 27th. Photo by Pat Hayes.

Local 249 conducts strike training

By Chrissy Kline

On June 27th members of the UAW International and regional staff met with 60 local elected and appointed leaders in preparation for upcoming contract negotiations. In the event that our goal of obtaining a satisfactory contract cannot be achieved through good faith bargaining, it is important that leadership is aware of all the options available to the local and can effectively guide the membership through whatever storms we may face.

Zenia Wilson, an Education Rep from Region 5 was joined by International UAW auditor Bill Stephen in educating those in attendance on: differentiating a strike from a lockout, what laws and regulations give members the right to strike, what the responsibilities of leadership and individual members are, how to distribute strike assistance pay or other necessary assistance and understanding the serious impact that a strike could have on our community, our local membership and most importantly our families.

Leadership feels it is important that as the local encourages members to be prepared for anything that lies

ahead of us that they do the same. This became even more serious when it was discussed in the session that approximately 78 percent of individuals in the United States live paycheck to paycheck, regardless of the amount of wages. With such a startling percentage of people barely making it day to day, it is hard to imagine how it can be possible to prepare for a potential work stoppage.

With up to 78 percent of our membership living paycheck to paycheck, it may not be feasible for everyone to set aside the funds needed to survive if negotiations break down. Some ways to prepare can include utilizing your den-

tal, vision and hearing benefits now as they would not be available during a strike. Members will have access to hospital, doctor and prescription benefits but in a local our size it can take time to process the membership so it is also recommended that where possible we set our prescriptions to 90 day refills to have ample supply in advance.

Build up your own pantry by watching for sales in grocery stores to stock up on pantry staples, non-perishables or frozen foods. Talk to your friends and organize a plan for cooking together and sharing the cost or prepare make ahead meals or casseroles to freeze. Discuss child care plans with co-workers, friends and family. Talk to lenders, creditors or community organizations early to make them aware that the situation is fluid and out of your control.

Members are allowed to obtain other employment in the event of a strike, but if your gross pay is more than \$250

you will not receive strike assistance pay. You will retain your medical benefits as long as you continue to do your assigned picket duties. Members on worker's compensation or sick and accident leave will not be eligible to receive strike assistance pay as they are not on active payroll. We also have no guarantees or assurances that Unicare will continue payments to those on sick and accident leave if we are on strike. In the event that this takes place, members will be able to clear through medical and then inform the company they will be joining the strike to obtain their strike assistance pay from that point forward.

The local leadership team has taken steps to further prepare for what lies ahead and will continue to update the membership as negotiations begin. If you have any further questions or concerns, please attend the UAW Local 249 monthly membership meetings, read your monthly newsletters or contact your committeeperson.

53 more temps to convert to in-progression

By Jim Fisher

In April, 44 of our temporary workers were converted to In-Progression employees. On June 17th we announced that an additional 53 temporary workers are being converted to In Progression. This gives us a total of 97 temporary workers being converted to full time. KCAP has also brought in 23 transfers from other plants.

This means KCAP has now filled 120 openings with full time employment for our plant. For the 97 members that have been converted to in-progression, we would like to congratulate you on your move to full time and remind you that if you haven't already you will need to set up a meeting with your benefit rep as your benefits will be upgraded.

The Transit System will remain on a 5x10 pattern with the potential of working Super Production Saturday's through August. The Truck System will remain on a 3-crew pattern. The company has stated that they are considering working a couple Super Production days in late July or early August to make up for lost production from the recent flooding. However, nothing has been confirmed at the time of this article for Truck Side.

Local 249 will begin local contract negotiations on July 15. We ask that

everyone understands that the availability of the bargaining committee will be limited while negotiations are underway. Please make sure to attend our monthly membership meetings for any future information regarding these negotiations as we move forward.

Our plant has been very successful over past several months in bringing back sourcing work, the construction of an additional press for our stamping plant, expansions of MSC Centers, and much more. KCAP's transit system is now working on a potential new fleet order. We have been told that our Transit System will build 300 vans in a trial run for Frito Lay. Hopefully, we can land this account to continue the profitability and success of our Transit vans.

The cafeteria has been going through several changes over the past few weeks in an effort to get our members different options for meals. We have made a request of them to



UAW Bargaining Chairman Jim Fisher announced at the June union meeting that 52 temporary workers were being converted to In-Progression status. Photo by Don Lehman.

extend their hours of their operations. We have been told that starting July 8th they will open one hour earlier in the mornings. They will now start opening at 4:30am. This will give our members an opportunity to grab breakfast before the start of their shift.

They have also told us they are looking into opening one hour earlier for the night shift as well.

We would like to wish everyone a safe summer vacation shutdown. We hope you all enjoy some well-earned time away.

2019 UAW Region 5 Special V-CAP Drive

Two Grand Prize 7-Day All Expense Paid Cruise for Two

Or Win a Laptop Computer or 5-Day All Expense Paid Elk Hunt

Winning Wednesdays
Buy a V-CAP Ticket for a
Chance to Win \$25 Gift Card or
Movie Tickets and Restaurant
Gift Card
Drawings Every Wednesday

Join the Platinum Club
Members Who Donate \$50 a Month
Get a Chance to Win A Cast UAW Wheel
Wall Decoration

Raise Your Monthly Donation to the
Next Level to Win a \$150 Gift Card

Monthly Drawing
Buy a Book of Tickets
For a Chance to Win a 90-Minute Massage
• Michael Kors Purse • Drone • Blue Tooth
Speaker • 10" Tablet
June Drawing
American Made Smoker Set
September Drawing
\$500 Costco Card

1 Ticket \$3 • 2 Tickets \$5 • 12 Tickets \$30

Preparations for potential strike underway

By Jason Starr

Zenia Wilson and Bill Stephen, representatives from the UAW International in Detroit were at Local 249 June 27 to help local leaders prepare for a potential strike in the event a new contract agreement isn't reached by the Sept. 15 deadline.

Our goal with negotiations is to reach a fair agreement with Ford on the terms of a new contract. If that agreement can be reached without a strike, that is to the benefit of our members and the company. However, the company must be made aware that if we can't reach a fair agreement, the union is fully prepared to strike.

We expect negotiations for the local contract to begin July 15 and talks for the national contract to get underway by the end of July.

The first step in that process is for the union membership to vote to authorize a strike if an agreement can't be reached. It is important for members to vote in this election. A big turnout, with a large majority voting to authorize a strike, if necessary, will send a powerful message to the company that UAW members are serious about our demands.

We are currently drawing up plans for a strike authorization vote and will inform members when it is scheduled.

There are a number of important steps that members need to take now to prepare for a potential strike.

First, make sure that Labor Relations

has your current address. In order to collect strike pay, you must perform your scheduled strike duty. To be notified when you are scheduled for strike duty we must have your current address.

Second, take care of any dental, hearing or vision care now. During a strike, the union strike fund will pay for continued health and life insurance coverage for active members in good standing. However, dental and vision coverage will be discontinued for the duration of the strike.

Third, begin now to set aside savings to supplement your strike pay during the strike. Avoid taking on any new payments that will come due during the strike.

At the last convention, the UAW raised strike pay to \$250 per week, however, having adequate savings set aside, especially if the strike drags on, puts your family in a stronger position to stay out until our demands are met.

Many members who I talk to believe that if there is a strike, it will be short. They cite the successful nine-hour Saline strike that just concluded. Right now, there is no way to predict whether or not there will be a strike, much less how long it will last.



Local 249 President Jason Starr speaks about the start of local and national contract negotiations with Ford at the June Membership Meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

The plant closures and layoffs at General Motors have raised the stakes in this round of negotiations dramatically. Ford has claimed that it is paying too much for our health care. FCA has entered merger talks with Renault.

Add to all that the structural changes in the industry that electric and autonomous vehicles are bringing and we are facing a very difficult round of negotiations.

The best advice I can give is to prepare for a long strike. If it turns out there is no strike or that it's of short duration, good. That's better for our

members.

Hope for the best, but prepare for the worst is probably the best advice I can give our members now.

Our union takes its responsibility for the health and welfare needs of UAW members and their families in times of struggle very seriously. That's why we are currently gearing up the local's Community Service Committee to help members in the event of a strike.

We are doing our best to keep the membership informed. Make sure you stay up to date in the coming months. It's starting to get very real.



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.

Retiree picnic moved indoors due to heat

By Susan Pena

Our Annual Retiree Picnic has been moved indoors due to the hot weather. We will meet at the union hall on the third Wednesday, August 21 at 10:30 a.m. The date has also been moved because of possible strike issues in September. Please plan to attend.

Dave Grant, Veterans liaison, spoke about partnering with the Motorcycle Committee for the 30/30 Raffle. There are (more than) 30 firearms being raffled at \$30.00/ticket over the course of 30 days. The money raised will benefit veterans, children and elderly in our community.

Steve Hibbs, Benefits Representative, spoke about health insurance. Delta Dental is our dental plan. Davis Vision is our vision provider. True Hearing is our hearing aid provider. If you have questions, please call the union hall.

Tonya Moore, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Kansas City Representative, spoke about hypertension (high blood pressure), offered brochures with information and suggested that we all get our blood pressure checked regularly in order to ward off this deadly disease. Larry Rupp, Retiree Representative, updated us on getting a defibrillator for the union hall.

Chairman Melvin Thompson had all the fathers stand and be recognized. Happy Father's Day to all.

The deaths reported in March were: William L. Burlingame, James S. Cook, Bobbie E. Drehle, George R. Foley, Paul F. Lindsay and Charles H. Wellman; April: Gerald V. Cooper Jr., Donald B. Dennis, Dallas R. Eichmeier, John A. Lee, Jimmie L. Quigley, Daniel R. Schmitt and Leanord G. Thies; May: Ronald E. Wine. Please pray for our fallen members and their families. Also we would like to apologize for omitting, misspelling or duplicating any member's names in the past.

We celebrated four birthdays and two anniversaries: Jean and Melvin Thompson have been married 22 years. Ethel and Paul Sandberg have been married 60 years. Congratulations to all.

There will be no Bingo until further notice. There also will be no July Retiree meeting.

Please come to the Annual Retiree "Picnic" on August 21, 2019 at 10:30 at the union hall. Bring a dessert if you'd like. We'll have lots of door prizes and lots of time to visit. Have a great and safe 4th of July.



Fathers stand together at the June monthly meeting for the UAW Local 249 retiree's chapter. We wish all retired fathers and their families a belated Happy Father's Day. We hope you all enjoyed the day with your families. Photo by Don Lehman

Accessing the new myfordbenefits.com and NESC for UAW-Ford Retirees

How to connect to your account your first time:

1. Go to myfordbenefits.com and click **New User?** (Under Log On)

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, enter your temporary **myfordbenefits.com** password that was mailed to you in mid-December. Then click the **Log On** button. Please note that your temporary password is case-sensitive and must be entered exactly as it appears.

4. **Create your new User ID**, password and PIN.

5. Select and answer security questions for fast resets in case you forget your 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**

Lost your temporary password?

If you no longer have your temporary **myfordbenefits.com** password, click **Forgot User ID or Password?** below the Log On button. Confirm your identity then select **Forgot Ford Benefits Password**. A new temporary password will be mailed to your preferred address on file.

If you do not have access to a computer, you can also call NESC and request a temporary password and PIN.

Questions? Use the "Help?" feature located below the Log On button on myfordbenefits.com. If you still need help, contact the NESC at 1-800-248-4444 between 9 am and 9 pm ET, Monday through Friday.



Get the official APP of United Auto Workers Local 249!

Connect with us to get the latest updates, sign up for text alerts, learn about Local 249 events, take action, and read stories that are relevant to you.

Download from the Google Play Store <http://bit.ly/2qZwEq6> or Apple Store <http://apple.co/2qq5E0l>



Like us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/UAWLocal249



UAW Local 249 members volunteered their time to help pack care packages for our troops that are stationed overseas. They partnered with Care Packages from Home which is a nationwide program that provides food, hygiene products and recreational items to U.S. soldiers stationed in Iraq. Photo by Don Lehman.

Local 249 members pack care packages for troops

By Pat Hayes

Some 165,000 active-duty military personnel are currently on duty serving outside the United States and its territories. Far from home and family, it can be lonely for the soldiers, sailors and air force personnel from United States who are deployed in more than 150 countries around the world.

To help relieve loneliness and to let our military personnel know that they are in our thoughts, members of Local 249's Veterans Committee and volunteers from other union standing committees packed 375 care packages. They were filled with books, DVDs, personal care items, canned meat and candy June 10 at the Elks Lodge in Blue Springs.

Dave Grant, chair of the Local 249 Veterans Committee, worked with Kim Weaver, a Local 31 member who chairs

the Region 5 Veterans Committee, and Samantha McDaniel and Lynda Constant-Passiglia of the Care Packages from Home organization.

"I wanted to let you know how appreciative we are of the care packages you sent," said one of the care package recipients in a letter. "Everything you placed in the packages will be used or eaten. I really like all the letters within the packages. They were fun to read."

Care Packages from Home is a

nation-wide program to provide food, hygiene, and recreational items to U.S. troops deployed to Iraq.

Since 2004 it has shipped 115,000 care packages overseas, including 282,000 lbs of bulk food, hygiene & recreation items overseas serving some 575,000 individual service members.

In recent years Care Packages from Home has also provided transitioning, at-risk, and homeless veterans with 65,633 lbs of food, hygiene & recreation items.

The mission of Care Packages from Home is to show "military members and veterans that we acknowledge and appreciate their many sacrifices in service of our freedoms as Americans."

The group's care packages and the supplies are intended to provide "a token of love and gratitude to these heroes."

In addition to helping to pack the care packages, locals 249 and 31 donated \$250 each to purchase items for the care packages and donated 500 pens printed at a union print shop so that our troops could write home.

"This was our first year working with Care Packages from Home," says Grant. "Next year our goal is to send 475 packages."

UAW members who volunteered their time were Christopher Jurgeson, Mike Richardson, Karen Combe, Alina "Kat" Sandridge, Hans Beebe, Kim Weaver, Dave Grant, Nicole Hobart-Zabel and Shauncey Gray.