

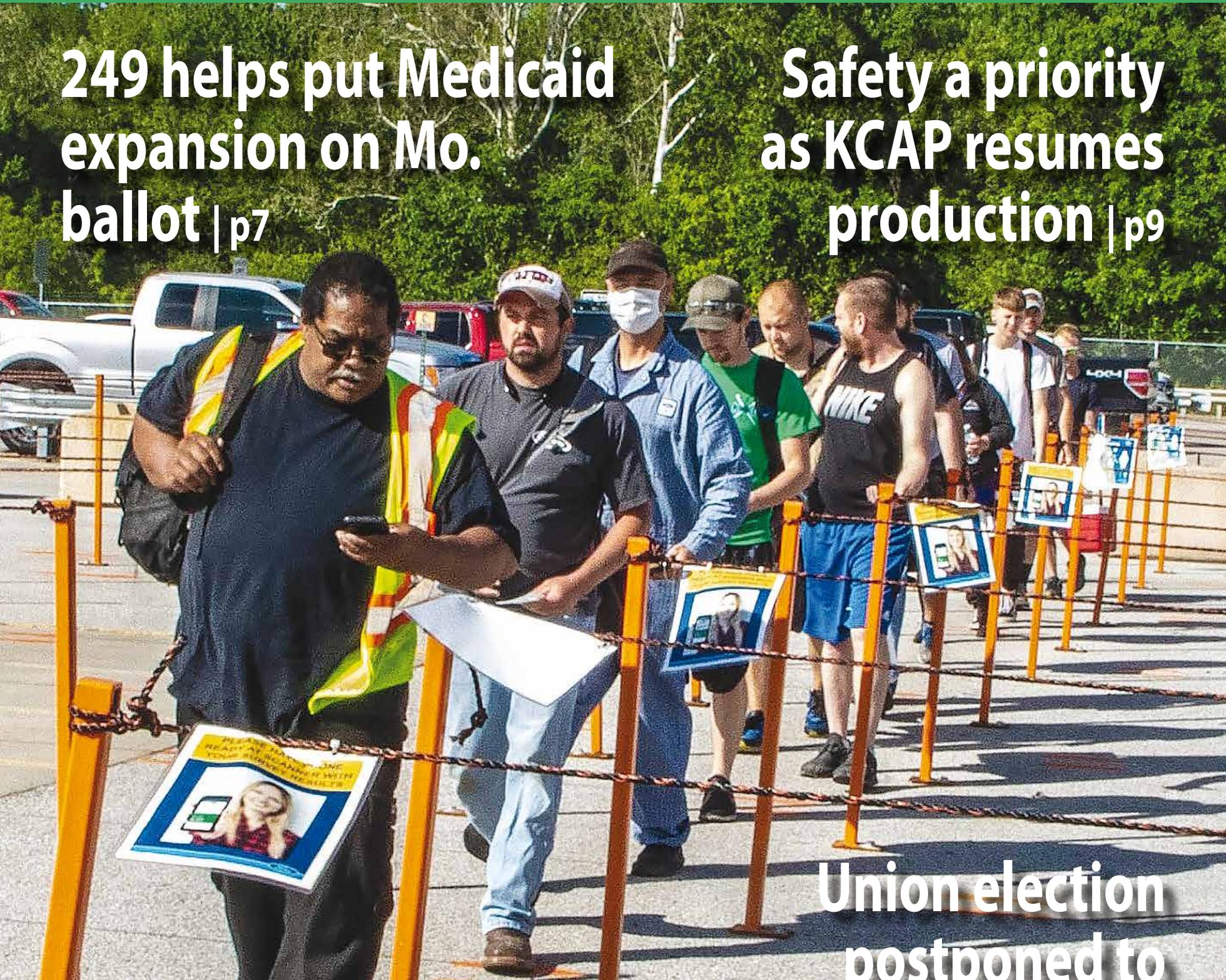
# FIRST LOCAL NEWS

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

June 2020

**249 helps put Medicaid expansion on Mo. ballot | p7**

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**Union election postponed to August | p6**

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International Union United Auto,  
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8040 NE 69 Highway  
Pleasant Valley, MO 64068  


**Local 249 members returning to work at the Kansas City Assembly Plant May 18 observe new safety protocols put in place by the UAW and Ford Motor Co. to protect workers from COVID-19. Photo by Don Lehman.**



Danny Mertell, a member of Local 249's Education Committee, and Angie Mertell prepare to join the Birthday Parade for quarantined kids April 26 at the union hall.



Brandon and Ashley Smith added their motorcycles to Local 249's Birthday Parade for quarantined kids April 26. Brandon works in the Transit System.



Jennifer Cherco and her son Marciano took part in the April 26 Birthday Parade for quarantined kids. Jennifer serves on the Consumer Affairs Committee.

## First Local News

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## UAW Local 249

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

## UAW-Ford Joint Programs

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### Quality

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**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

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**UNICARE Medical/Disability Leave Claims** 1-877-475-9652

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

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

**UAW-Ford TESPHE** 1-800-248-4444

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# The Picket Line

## Mo. Unemployment Trust Fund running low

**M**issouri has about 13 weeks' worth of money for unemployment benefits before it runs out of money, a new study indicates.

Missouri is 29th in a ranking of how many weeks' worth of money each state has in its trust fund, according to study conducted by the Tax Foundation, a conservative-leaning nonprofit. Kansas ranks 12th, and has an estimated 24 weeks of funding left.

State shutdown orders enacted to curb the spread of Covid-19 have caused unemployment to skyrocket in a short amount of time. The Show Me State's five-week total of initial unemployment claims was more 392,000 from March 15 to April 18 — 6.4% of Missouri's entire population. In Kansas, more than 188,000 people had filed initial unemployment claims in those five weeks, about 6.5% of the state's population. — *Fox4*

## Mo. Medicaid expansion petition victory

**S**upporters of an initiative to expand Medicaid coverage to tens of thousands of residents in Missouri said they submitted the necessary signatures to the state to place the measure on the November general election ballot.

The Fairness Project, which has helped several other states win Medicaid expansion at the ballot box, Friday said "the campaign submitted twice the number of signatures required." Once certified by state officials in Missouri, the state's ballot measure to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act will be the second such effort slated for later this year after Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt earlier this month placed a question on that state's June 30 ballot.

"We're seeing a groundswell of support from Americans, who are sick and tired of a broken political system that has left hard working people without the care they need," The Fairness Project's executive director, Jonathan Schleifer said. — *Forbes*

## Mo. Republicans push controversial redistricting plan

**R**epublicans are again pushing a plan to toss a redistricting system voters approved less than two years ago.

Democrats and backers of the 2018 ballot initiative known as Amendment 1, or Clean Missouri, already opposed the proposed changes. Now, they say, the GOP majority is trying to ram their redistricting plan through while most of the state's attention is focused on virus-fighting efforts.

The Senate approved the resolution in early February. The House General Laws Committee took up and approved Senate Joint Resolution 38 on Thursday. The full House must approve the plan for it to appear on the ballot. The annual legislative session ends May 15.

"Do you think that we should be having this conversation in a context when we have a once-in-a-century epidemic that's killed hundreds of thousands of people and that's put more than 30 million Americans out of work?" Rep. Jon Carpenter, D-Gladstone, asked Sen. Dan Hegeman, R-Cosby, the sponsor of the resolution. — *St. Louis Post Dispatch*

## UAW encouraged by Ford safety protocols

**"W**e are encouraged by the results thus far of the safety protocols being instituted at the plants making medical equipment and in plans to implement these safeguards when it is safe for our members to report for work," said Kariem, director of the UAW Ford Department, in prepared remarks. "We also recognize that we all have a role in self-reporting any exposure without repercussions and in following through on implementing these protections."

Auto industry executives have been discussing the possibility of a production restart in mid-May or late May. — *Detroit Free Press*

### WACKY PACKAGES:

IF YOU LIKED TRUMP WINES, TRUMP STEAKS, TRUMP VODKA, AND TRUMP BOTTLED WATER, YOU'LL LOVE THIS!

AND WHY WOULDN'T YOU? THEY ARE THE BEST EVER, PROBABLY IN HISTORY! BELIEVE ME...

FROM THE MAKERS OF LIES-ALL, IT'S NEW TRUMP BRAND BLEACH



## UAW members support community

By Rory Gamble

**W**hen UAW members pledge to support each other, they do not mean just fellow UAW members. The sense of brotherhood and sisterhood is not only about working conditions, fair wages and benefits for UAW members — it's about supporting the whole community, ensuring healthy lives and doing our part as a family of people creating rewarding lives in this country and around the world.

Nothing could illustrate this fact more than the thousands of UAW members who have volunteered to work around the clock with companies in every sector to manufacture much-needed medical equipment during this time of crisis. Working with health officials and governmental agencies, the UAW has worked with multiple companies to respond to the COVID-19 crisis by shifting production to face masks for medical use, personal protective equipment (PPE) and respirators. And it is our membership on the front lines, taking the risk and doing the work.

Cindy Parkhurst works at the Ford Flat Rock Assembly Plant. Like hundreds of workers at Ford, General Motors, Toyota and other companies, Parkhurst has gone back to work to make face shields, surgical masks and even ventilators in a wartime-like effort to stem shortages of protective gear and equipment during the coronavirus pandemic.

At Ford Motor Co., members continue to step up and volunteer to work during this difficult time at the facility across from the Flat Rock plant to make respirators and at the Van Dyke Transmission Plant to make face masks for medical use. Diligently following stringent Centers for Disease and Prevention (CDC) guidelines, they are going above and beyond to proudly volunteer to serve their communities and their nation.

Take Travis Fick for example: On staff at the Warren Technical Center, he

jumped wholeheartedly into the fight against the virus when he heard there was a shortage of personal protection equipment. The Local 160 member started a Facebook group to rally others who could and would help out.

Within days, a few hundred people were in the Facebook group, some sewing, and some helping raise awareness. Now, the group includes about 1,300 members. Nearly 8,000 masks have been donated.

Or Penni Cox, who was previously laid off from her job at the General Motors plant in Kokomo, Indiana. Cox, a third-generation autoworker and member of UAW Local 292, is now making ventilators at the restructured facility.

And here's what she had to say about the work: "We tell our children and grandchildren to give back and pay it forward. Here is our opportunity to show them exactly what that means."

Cox says that despite being concerned about contracting the virus, "We all just want to protect our family and friends. We're not on the front lines like doctors and nurses and medical professionals, but this is our way to support the fight. This is history. One day we can explain to our grandchildren that this was the year they couldn't have a birthday party, but it was the year we helped save lives."

And that's what the UAW is about. Community. Helping each other. Going the extra mile. — *Detroit News*



Ford Motor Co. announced COVID-19 safety protocols for reopening manufacturing plants in North America April 30. Photos by Don Lehman.

# Ford announces safety protocols for manufacturing

## Ford Motor Co.

**The standards and precautions introduced [April 30] expand on those used in Ford facilities in China, where work has already resumed, and in the U.S., where Ford has been manufacturing medical equipment for weeks. The people building those medical supplies have stayed safe and healthy by wearing face masks, face shields and other personal protection equipment, and maintaining at least six feet of space from other Ford people wherever possible.**

The automotive industry accounts for 6% of gross domestic product in the U.S. – more than 7 million jobs are dependent upon automakers, dealers and suppliers.

No automaker employs more hourly workers in the U.S. than Ford, which manufactures and exports more vehicles in the U.S. than any other automaker. Last year Ford built more than 492,000 more vehicles in America than the next highest-producing automaker.

F-Series alone requires four U.S. plants, approximately 19,000 Ford employees and 2,000 U.S. suppliers – and generates an estimated \$50.2 billion in global sales revenue annually. That's more than the 2019 annual revenues of American Express, Coca-Cola, Cisco Systems and Delta Airlines.

Ford is working to safely restart manufacturing in the U.S. and North America. The company recently announced plans to begin that process in Europe on May 4, and a small number of hourly and salaried employees returned to work this week in North America to begin installing equipment and putting in place new safety protocols.

Ford already has started educating its global workforce to seamlessly integrate and follow these guidelines, all captured in a safety playbook that will be available for employees along with personal protection and hygiene items, like masks and sanitizer.

While exact return-to-work-dates for most hourly and salaried workers have not been determined, educating them now will enable them to return to work as safely as possible.

The plan to return to work will continue to be updated with input from global medical experts. Those experts include an external epidemiologist and infectious disease experts, Ford's Global Data Insight and Analytics team, the UAW, in addition to employing best-practices recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization, among others.

Reopening safety protocols include scheduling more time between production shifts to limit interaction between employees and allow for additional cleaning. Workspaces have been modified where possible to al-

low for social distancing, and all Ford people – hourly and salaried employees – will receive personal protective equipment (PPE) to be worn inside Ford facilities. Supervisors are being instructed to have salaried employees work according to specific schedules to prevent unnecessary contact. Cafeterias, small meeting rooms, fitness centers and other small common areas where social distancing is not possible will remain closed.

Safety actions include:

Daily online health self-certifications completed before work every day. Employees or visitors who indicate they may have symptoms or may have been exposed to the virus will be told not to come to work.

No-touch temperature scans upon arrival. Anyone with a raised temperature will not be permitted to enter and will be instructed to visit a physician to be cleared before returning to work.

Required face masks for everyone entering a Ford facility. Every Ford team member will be provided a care kit including a face mask and other items to help keep them healthy and comfortable at work.

Safety glasses with side shields or face shields as added requirements when jobs don't allow for social distancing. Ford is evaluating workstations and work patterns and will implement other measures that protect workers whose jobs are typically performed within six feet of another

person.

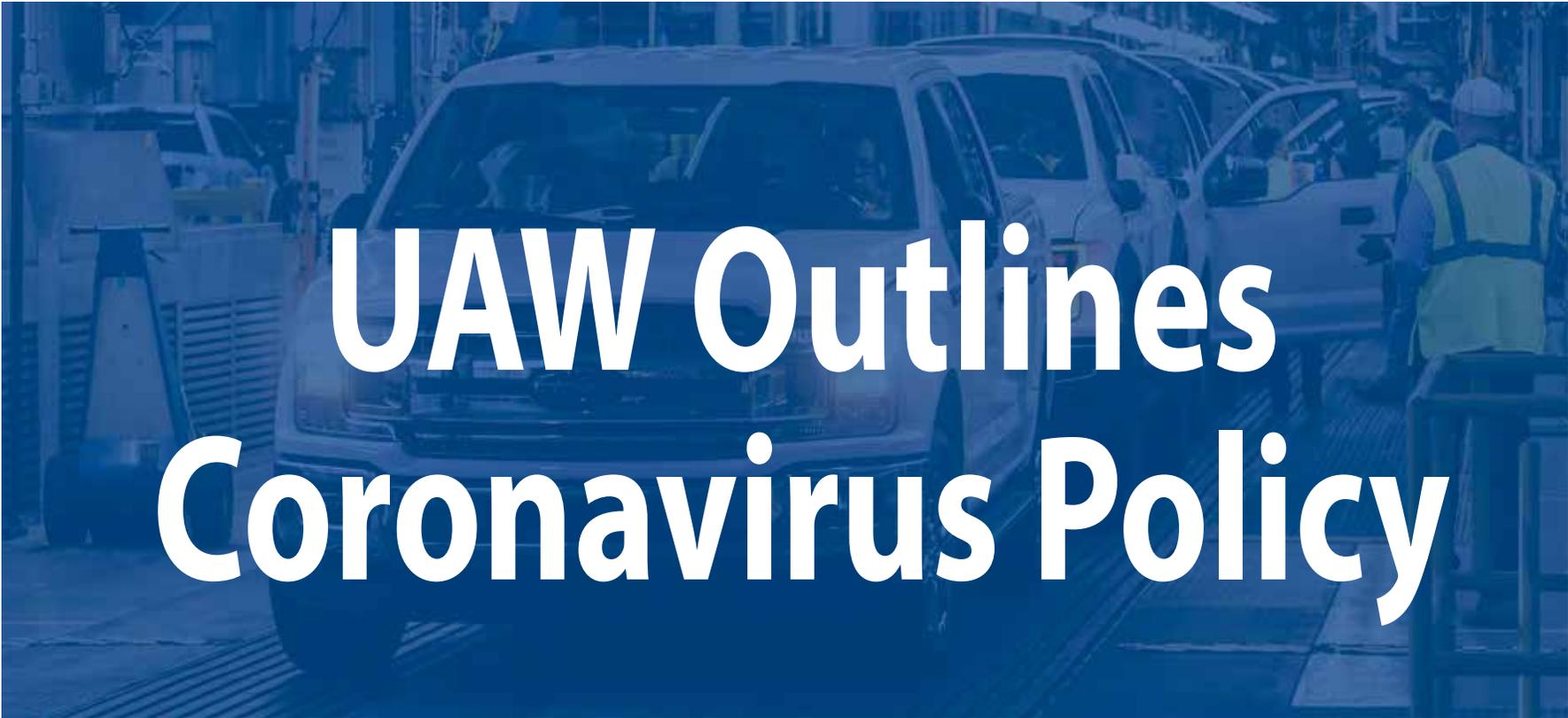
Facilities that have been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and will be cleaned with increased frequency when they reopen.

Hand sanitation stations throughout Ford facilities and CDC signs with proper handwashing methods in all restrooms.

A comprehensive playbook with procedures and protocols that detail how the Ford team will work together to help keep everyone safe and healthy.

"Science and data are driving Ford's return to work, including close collaboration with experts in the field of infectious disease and epidemiology, to set safety standards we are confident will protect employees as they return to work," said Dr. Walter Talamonti, corporate medical director at Ford. "The protocols we've established will require employees take multiple steps every day to make sure that they are safe, healthy and able to work."

Added Gary Johnson, Ford chief manufacturing and labor affairs officer: "These protocols are the result of weeks of working closely with our unions, especially the UAW, on assuring the health and safety of our Ford family while planning how to reopen our facilities. We have evidence that these protocols work and are already using them without a single issue to date in Ford plants where we are manufacturing ventilators and PPE for medical personnel."



# UAW Outlines Coronavirus Policy

**By Rory L. Gamble**

**A**s the United States is faced with the concern of the new Coronavirus known as COVID-19, I feel it is important to speak to this topic with all our UAW membership.

I want to be very clear that we do not take this matter lightly. In detailing some important actions that our UAW is taking relative to the virus; I want to assure our brothers and sisters that we continue discussions daily to ensure the necessary steps are being taken to maintain a state of preparedness.

In addition to focusing on preparedness, our leadership is asked to be diligent in maintaining a constant watch on the potential spread of COVID-19 to ensure any new challenges are recognized and reacted to accordingly.

The direction given to businesses and the American public are predominantly derived from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations and the World Health Organization (WHO).

As our UAW staff and leadership monitor and assess the situation there have already been several steps taken to limit exposure potentials.

This includes travel bans and restrictions according to potential threat levels geographically.

This also includes restrictions on modes of transportation, such as airlines both domestically and internationally.

We are working with companies to ensure that vendors traveling internationally into the U.S. have restrictions depending on geographic point of origin and potential for

exposures, including quarantine protocols.

Working with FCA, GM and Ford to enhance COVID-19 / Coronavirus protections for manufacturing and warehouse workers

The internal UAW Health and Safety Department protocols have been updated and shared with Health

and Safety Committees and companies.

In addition to these steps, there have been leadership communications sent to all leaders, including this correspondence, to share the most current information with our members.

Our UAW Health and Safety Department back in February began to track best practices and impacts on our worksites and that work continues. Our UAW Nationally appointed Health and Safety representatives locally to actively engage our membership and help answer questions to address concerns appropriately.

I also want to spend a moment to talk about basic and simple hygiene practices that, according to the CDC, we can all practice to help each other maintain a level of potential protection against the spread of any and all viruses, including COVID-19:

Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap is not available with at least 60% alcohol.

Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or cloth when you sneeze or cough

Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

We will continue to press for the utmost preparedness and response capabilities from senior leadership at all levels. I want to thank all of you for the caution and preparedness you display at home and in the workplace regarding this matter.

Through Solidarity we will protect our families and keep our economy flowing.

## Priorities for workers and unions

- Comprehensive workplace plans to identify potential exposure routes, controls to mitigate risk, such as isolation, social distancing and personal protective equipment, and training procedures.
- Emphasis on personal hygiene practices, hand-washing and respiratory etiquette.
- Protocols to clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Adherence to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations when hosting and attending events or large gatherings. These recommendations may change as the situation evolves.
- Strong standards and guidance from agencies in charge of protecting different groups of workers that recognize the necessity for airborne protections for front-line workers.
- Adequate supplies of personal protective equipment, especially N95 respirators and those offering a greater level of protection, and respirator fit testing.
- Plans for supply shortages, including triage and prioritization.
- Protocols in case of a workplace or community outbreak, including possible self-quarantine or workplace quarantine.
- Resources and preparation for a surge in demand for health services, including hospital beds and caregivers.
- Much greater capacity for coronavirus testing, with a priority for testing health care workers who take care of patients.
- Policies to make it possible for sick workers, quarantined workers, parents of children whose schools have closed and workers caring for loved ones in these situations to stay at home without the loss of pay, seniority or benefits.
- Policies to ensure that workers are not discouraged by cost considerations from seeking preventive treatment, testing, ongoing treatment or, eventually, voluntary vaccination.
- Policies to address the pandemic's impact on the U.S. economy and on specific sectors, with a guarantee that any sectoral assistance actually benefits workers.

# The new Coronavirus normal at KCAP

Local 249 members who returned to work at the Ford Motor Kansas City Assembly Plant May 18 found that a lot had changed as the UAW and Ford implemented new safety protocols to protect workers. Photos by Don Lehman.



Members get a daily color code on the UAW-Ford app if they pass screening.



Thermal imaging cameras take the temperature of those reporting to work.



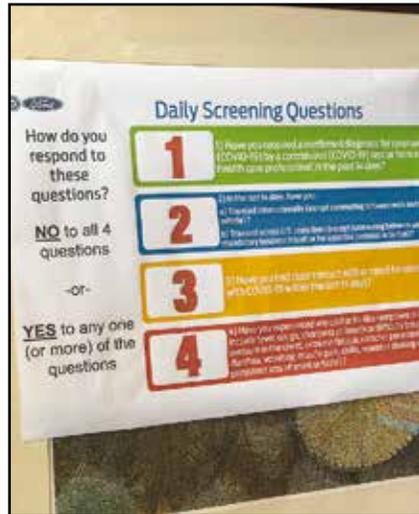
Posters outlining safety protocols have been posted throughout the plant.



Social distancing begins in the parking lot as UAW members return to work.



The screening questions and temperature check are recorded on member phones.



A new UAW-Ford screening app checks for COVID-19 symptoms at check in.



Masks and other safety items are provided to members at work.



New hand-washing stations have been installed throughout the plant.

## Official Election Notice Amalgamated Local Union 249 UAW

In accordance with the UAW Constitution and Local Union 249 By-Laws, the election of all Executive Board Officers, Bargaining Chairperson of the Assembly Unit, District Committeepersons of the Assembly Unit, Alternate District Committeepersons of the Assembly Unit, Bargaining Committee Members of the Production Assembly Unit, Skilled Trades Bargaining Committee Member, Bargaining Chairperson of the Parts Depot Unit and Parts Depot Bargaining Committeeperson, Bargaining Chairperson of the Nurses Unit, Bargaining Chairperson of Team Solutions and Team Solutions Committeepersons and Retiree's Executive Board Representative will be held in the following manner:

Election will be held in the following manner:

Beginning at 5:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 20, 2020 and will close at 5:00 a.m. Friday, August 21, 2020.

(24 continuous hours)

Beginning at 5:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 22, 2020 and will close at 5:00 a.m. on Sunday, August 23, 2020.

(24 continuous hours)

Election held at UAW Local 249, 8040 NE 69 Hwy, Pleasant Valley, MO.

Voting machines will be used. Members in good standing are eligible

to vote. Bring proper identification such as Ford I.D., Union Card, Drivers License, PMHV License, or other types of photo I.D.

**Parts Depot- HVC - Thursday, August 20, 2020 from 11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.** (8 continuous hours). Voting held in cafeteria.

### Runoff Election

If runoff is required for Executive Board positions, Bargaining Chairperson of the Assembly Unit, Bargaining Committee of the Production Assembly Unit, Skilled Trades

Bargaining Committee member, election will be held for 24 hours from 5:00 a.m. Thursday, August 27, 2020 until 5:00 a.m. Friday, August 28, 2020, and 5:00 a.m. Saturday, August 29, to 5:00 a.m. on Sunday, August 30, 2020. If runoff is required for Committeeperson or Alternate Committeeperson, election will be four hours long (beginning two (2) hours prior to the end of the shift and concluding two (2) hours after the end of the shift) that began Thursday, August 27 or Saturday,

August 29, 2020.

### Absentee Voting

Members may vote absentee for all elected positions if you are out of town on company or local union business. A signed statement must be filed with the Local Union in sufficient time for the member to secure a ballot and redeposit same with Amalgamated Local Union 249 prior to start of election.

*Shirley Mata  
Recording Secretary*

# 249 helps put Medicaid expansion on Mo. ballot

By Pat Hayes

Once again, the citizens of Missouri have done the job their elected representatives refuse to do. On May 1, grass roots groups – including UAW Local 249 – submitted petitions containing more than 350,000 signatures to place Medicaid expansion on the Nov. 3 ballot. That's more than double the number required to put the initiative before the voters.

Missouri Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft ruled May 22 that the citizen's initiative received more than the required number of signatures from registered voters to be voted on in the August election. It will appear on the ballot as Constitutional Amendment 2.

If Medicaid expansion passes in August, "we will close a huge coverage gap," according to faith and community leaders who make up Missouri Health Care for All, a group involved in the petition effort.

"Currently in Missouri, childless adults are unable to qualify for basic health care through Medicaid," according to the group. "A single mother of two can't qualify if she makes anything more than \$3,612 per year – just 18% of the poverty line."

Supporters of Medicaid expansion estimate many as 700 Missourians will die each year until the state expands Medicaid, because people without insurance are sicker and die younger.

The federal Medicaid program provides medical insurance to low-income people and individuals with disabilities.

The Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, provided for the expansion of Medicaid to cover all individuals earning incomes up to \$17,600 a year. That's 138% of the federal poverty level.

Under the ACA, the federal government will cover 90% of the state's Medicaid expansion costs.

If approved by the voters, the constitutional amendment would:

- Expand Medicaid eligibility in Missouri to low-income adults who are 19 years old or older and younger than 65.
- Prohibit any additional restrictions or requirements to qualify for Medicaid coverage than for other populations that qualify for Medicaid coverage.
- Require the state to seek maximum federal funding of Medicaid expansion.

Missouri is just one of 14 states that have so far refused to expand Medicaid. In all, 36 states have adopted Medicaid expansion measures.

Currently, Missouri's Medicaid

program doesn't cover most adults without children. The state's income eligibility threshold for parents is one of the lowest in the nation at about one-fifth of the poverty level.

Supporters of Medicaid expansion estimate that up 300,000 low-income Missourians, most of whom are working, will get health care if the initiative is passed.

Missouri Health Care for All leaders estimate that Medicaid expansion will:

- Bring billions of Missouri tax dollars back into the state.
- Save and create 24,000 jobs statewide.
- Protect our hospitals from devastating budget cuts, which will result in loss of jobs and services for everyone.
- People with mental illness will be able to access the care they need.
- Children will have healthier parents.

Supporters of expansion say passage of the initiative will save many rural hospitals across the state.

"In just the past six months," Missouri Health Care for All says, "hospitals



Local 249 member Garrett Boyd signs the petition to put Medicaid expansion on the ballot for Member to Member Committee activist Laura Coy.

have either cut or kept vacant more than 3,000 jobs statewide. Expanding

Medicaid will bring back these jobs and create thousands more."

Local 249's Member to Member Committee activists Cameron Pennington, Laura Coy, Cody Watkins, Reuben Miller, Tony Gott, Nicholas Dibben, Cortez Sexton, Franklin Campbell, Tom Low, James Suiter and William DeCoudres circulated the Medicaid expansion petition at the Main Gate, Transit entrance and the North Lot during the first two weeks of March.

Cody Watkins and Cortez Sexton worked the Truck Paint entrance, Lamar Taylor and Franklin Campbell worked the Truck Body entrance on March 11, while Laura Coy, Cameron Pennington and William DeCoudres worked inside the plant in all the departments on March 12 and 13.

Education Committee members Gary Thomas, Terri Hall, Jake Diggs, Christopher Allinder, Gloria Preston, Tonya Hargiss, Sabrina Woodson, Amber McCloud, Breena Carroll, Terrell Marshall also helped to circulate the petitions at KCAP.

In all, Local 249 turned in 2,020 signatures during those two weeks according to Member to Member Committee Chair William DeCoudres.



Local 249 Member to Member Co-chair Cameron Pennington, clockwise from the bottom, Lamar Taylor, Reuben Miller, Franklin Campbell, Nicholas Dibben, Laura Coy, and Cody Watkins petition to put Medicare expansion on the Nov. 3 ballot in Missouri.



On May 3, 2018, the Clean Missouri coalition submitted 346,956 signatures to the Secretary of State's office in Jefferson City, more than twice the number required to qualify the initiative petition for the November 2018 ballot. Missouri voters demanded fair elections in the state by passing the measure with 62% of the vote. Now, Republicans in the Missouri legislature want to overturn the will of the voters. They've placed what many are calling "Dirty Missouri" on the Nov. ballot.

# Republicans put "Dirty Missouri" on ballot

By Chrissy Kline

**While our country is in the throes of an unprecedented upheaval, the Republican-controlled House of the Show Me State was busy undermining the will of the people by trying to pass Senate Joint Resolution 38 (SJR 38). In November 2018, more than 1.4 million voters in Missouri passed Clean Missouri, a redistricting reform that would limit lobbyist gifts to lawmakers and change the state's redistricting process to require a new nonpartisan state demographer to draw out the legislative maps used for the General Assembly.**

The bill to overturn the fair election provisions passed in 2018 — which some have dubbed "Dirty Missouri" — passed the Senate, was heard by a Republican-controlled House committee, and was then sent to the full house for a vote on whether to put it to the public for a vote in August or November.

House Minority Leader Crystal Quade is not on the General Laws Committee that voted in April on the bill, but still spoke in opposition of the bill and her disappointment that they were attempting to undo changes voted on by the public before they were even put into practice.

"It is disappointing, but not surprising, that Republican leadership has chosen to prioritize blatantly partisan

legislation to overturn voter-approved redistricting reforms instead of focusing on the public health threat and economic devastation from COVID-19" she stated after the committee voted 9-4 in favor of the resolution.

Clean Missouri would have helped to make redistricting fair and non-

partisan, something that self-serving politicians couldn't allow to happen. To further prove that point, voting on an important initiative about transparency in the process of redistricting was done in the middle of a pandemic.

The Clean Missouri campaign released a statement after the General Laws Committee voted to advance the bill. "Missourians are sick and dying, and our economy is in chaos. Our leaders should be finding ways to manage the pandemic and pull together, not advancing a plan to overturn the will of Missouri voters and put a radical gerrymandering scheme into the state constitution."

Despite the efforts of those in opposition to ignoring the voice of the

voters and the threat of a pandemic looming, on May 13, after extensive debate over the timing of the bill and its legitimacy it passed with a vote of 98-58.

Rep. Peter Meredith noted the hearing room was lacking in members of the public due to a stay at home order "and yet here we are, on a day when they're not supposed to be here, moving forward...to undo what they said they wanted."

While Missourians are worrying about their families, their jobs, and the ability for our communities and economies to bounce back from a pandemic, their wishes were being ignored and undermined in Jefferson City. When the time comes for our voices to be heard again at the voting booths, be sure to keep in mind who fought for your families in your time of need and who took the opportunity to grab for more power while we were sick and struggling.

Even some Republicans are worried that they've gone too far.

"This will not pass at all," Rep. Rocky Miller warned his Republican colleagues. "This will be as bad as right-to-work; this will be three strikes in a row."

**Nov. 3  
Vote NO on Amendment 3  
The Dirty Missouri Plan**

# Safety a priority as KCAP resumes production

By Jim Fisher

**T**he Kansas City Assembly Plant resumed production of day shift Transit and A and B Crew Truck side on May 18. Night shift Transit is set to return to work on June 1. Also, on June 1, the Transit System will go back to the original five-day schedule. The Stamping Plant will also be using all three shifts of production on June 1. On June 8, we have been told KCAP will return the C-Crew back to production. Assuming there are no other issues by June 8, KCAP will be back to all the original schedules before the plant was stopped to address the COVID19 shutdown.

For production purposes right now, the Transit is in very high demand with fleet sales. On Truck side even though no F-Series were produced for two months sales remained strong. On-line orders were higher than ever, and about a third of Fords dealerships were able to remain open in parts of the country. Ford also applied several incentives to F-150's which helped our customers at the dealerships. However, the future of production for the rest of this year will be hard to predict. I expect a high demand for a few months as there is a need to restock the dealerships. After that is done, we will see the true effects of what 39 million people filing unemployment has done to the economy.

There have been many questions regarding the decision to start production again. The decision as to when to start back up is contractually the decision of Ford Motor Company.

For Local 249 Leadership, the highest priority right now is how do we keep our members safe while working though COVID-19. Upon re-opening, Ford introduced the Returning to Work Playbook. This playbook has the additional safety measures that were implemented at other Ford facilities. Things like taking a survey and temperature scanning before entering the facility, requiring masks to be worn at all times, and cleaning workstations after shifts. While those items remain in place other aspects of the playbook keep changing, and sometimes several times in a week and with very little updates to the union or our members.

In May, a joint letter was communicated that if the virus were detected in the plant an immediate shutdown would take place for 24 hours. That was later changed to shutdown long enough to fog the workstation and the areas that employee has been in contact with.

Part of the playbook also discusses coming into contact with someone who has a positive test for the COVID-19. The playbook defines close contact as being within approximately

six feet of the COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time (15 minutes) or having direct contact with the infectious COVID-19 case. Another part of the playbook discusses daily cleaning inside the plant.

Currently the Playbook is at 64 pages and has specific protocols and measures that area to be followed daily. This is not a list of "Good Ideas," these are the requirements of running the plant in the safest way possible while dealing with COVID-19. I understand that this is new to everyone, but we are not satisfied that KCAP has followed these guidelines closely enough. This local will continue to make all possible

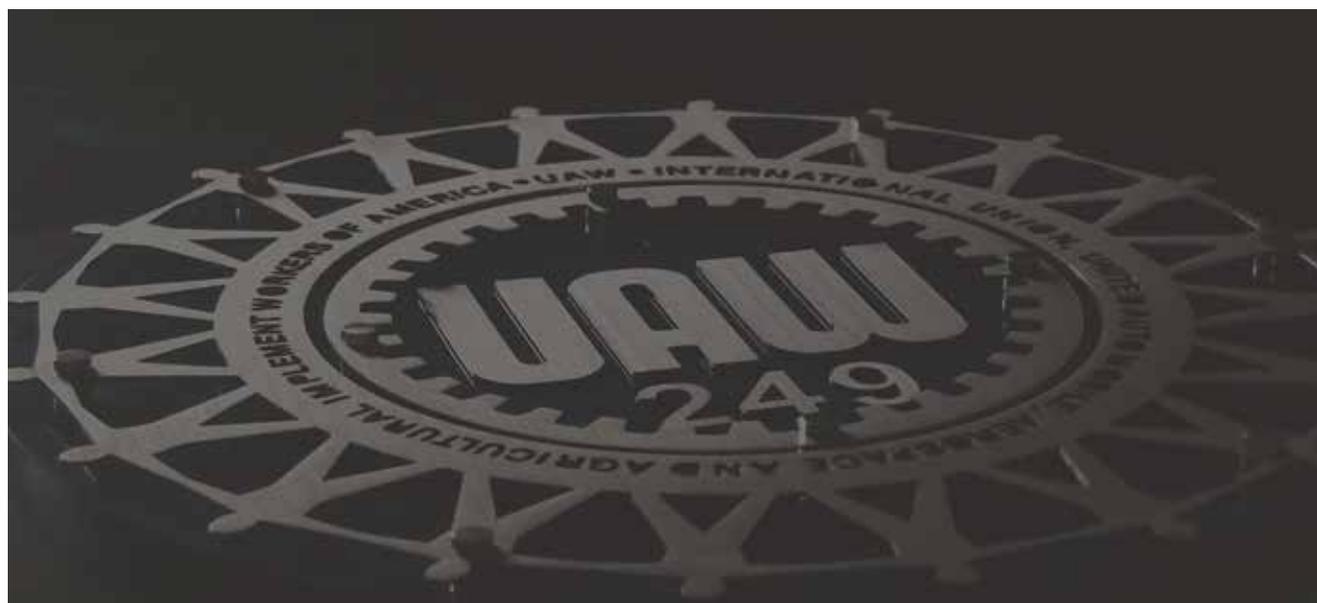


Local 249 Bargaining Chair Jim Fisher addresses issues related to re-opening KCAP amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Photo by Don Lehman.

improvements as we go forward.

On a final note, during the month of May, Local 249 had 23 of our members converted from temporary status

to full time in-progression status. The entire leadership team would like to congratulate these new full-time members.



## Attention UAW Local 249 Retirees

*Is your death benefit policy through the local up to date?*

*If you are not sure you can call the hall at 816-454-6333 or send in a check payable to: UAW Local 249 for \$18 and we will send a receipt with your due date and who is on file as your beneficiary.*

# Republican legislators leave Mo. workers behind

By Jason Starr

**M**issouri's House Minority Leader Crystal Quade had it just right when she noted that, "for House Republicans, responding to a disease that has affected thousands of Missourians, killed hundreds and left countless unemployed wasn't just a backburner issue. It never made it to the stove."

As the Missouri legislative session drew to a close May 15, Republicans — who enjoy large majorities in both the House and Senate — found that they didn't have time to consider giving frontline food, grocery, and pharmacy workers temporary hazardous workplace protections, PPE, or free childcare services.

Nor — with tens of thousands out of work — did they find the time to fix the state's broken unemployment compensation program.

They did, however, find the time to legalize brass knuckles.

The Republican obsession with overturning voter approved initiatives continued as the COVID-19 crisis deepened, as well.

The legislature approved a measure to place what many are calling "Dirty Missouri" on the November ballot to overturn the Clean Missouri initiative passed by a 62% majority of the voters in 2018.

Clean Missouri ordered that legislative districts be drawn up in a fair, nonpartisan manner. If passed, the legislature's "Dirty Missouri" proposal will continue the gerrymandering that has plagued the state since 2010.

The Dirty Missouri reversal of the voters will was so blatant that it left

some Republicans — normally oblivious to public opinion — concerned they'd overplayed their hand.

"This will not pass at all," warned Rep. Rocky Miller. "This will be as bad as right-to-work; this will be three strikes in a row."

Raising the state's minimum wage was overwhelmingly approved by voters in 2018, yet our Republican representatives found time to consider exempting private schools from the law's provisions at a time when many were unable to pay their rent and may face eviction in coming weeks.

Although we are living through a pandemic that the Missouri Dept. of Health and Senior Services reports has now infected 12,291 with COVID-19 and caused 686 deaths, the legislature once again refused to approve Medicaid expansion which would provide health care coverage to many of the low-wage workers who face a higher risk of infection by keeping essential services running while the rest of us were sheltering in place.

With the Republican-dominated legislature once again refusing to do its job, 350,000 Missourians signed petitions to place Medicaid expansion on the ballot.

Like right-to-work, minimum



Local 249 President Jason Starr condemns Missouri Republicans for failing the state's workers during the Coronavirus pandemic. Photo by Don Lehman.

wage and Clean Missouri, the Medicaid expansion initiative demonstrates how contemptuous Republicans are of the will of the state's people.

No sooner was the petition certified by Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft, than Gov. Mike Parson moved it from the November to August ballot in hopes that low turnout would lead to defeat of the initiative.

Republicans tried to play the same dirty trick with right to work and failed miserably. Local 249 will mobilize members and the community to support Medicaid expansion over the summer.

Amid the foolishness in Jefferson City over the past month, there are a few bits of good news.

Democrats fought hard to provide COVID-19 testing at no out-of-pocket cost for anyone whose doctor recommends testing. They also passed an expansion of absentee voting. All voters will now be able to request their absentee ballots online instead of only by mail. That will be safer than voting in person during the COVID-19 pandemic.

That may increase turnout, something Republicans seemingly dread.



## 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.

## ATTENTION RETIREES

The June and July Retiree Meetings have been cancelled to protect our members from exposure to Covid-19.

We hope to resume Retiree Meetings in August. That decision will be based on the best scientific and medical advice available at the time.

Please observe CDC advisories on social distancing, frequent hand washing and wearing a cloth face covering in public. Stay at home if possible.



Local 249 Retiree events have been temporarily suspended due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Photo by Don Lehman.

# President Trump “protecting” seniors, really?

**By Richard Fiesta**

**Executive Director of the Alliance for Retired Americans**

**M**ay 1 was the start of Older Americans Month and seniors are more at risk for their health and economic security than they have been in decades.

The CDC’s national shelter in place recommendations expire today, putting millions of seniors further at risk. We remain in the midst of a COVID-19 pandemic. So far, over half of ICU admissions and 80% of deaths from COVID-19 have been among people aged sixty-five and over. That is outrageous and it is unacceptable to end shelter in place without scientific justification.

The Trump Administration has been asleep at the switch which has led to avoidable illnesses and premature deaths of older Americans. Instead, President Trump has used this crisis as a pretense for weakening the retirement and health care seniors have earned over a lifetime. The incessant calls for cutting the payroll tax, the foundation of Social Security, is but one example.

A president who protects seniors would require immediate, universal testing of nursing home residents and staff, like Maryland Governor Larry

Hogan did yesterday;

A president who protects seniors would require OSHA to issue guidelines and emergency regulations to protect nursing home employees and residents who are most vulnerable from COVID-19 from contracting the disease;

A president who protects seniors would require all nursing homes and residential care facilities to report and release the number of COVID-19 cases and fatalities in their facility daily;

A president who protects seniors would not be trying to shield nursing homes from lawsuits filed by families whose loved ones died or were injured due to unsafe practices during the pandemic;

A president who protects seniors would require that every nursing home increase, not relax, requirements for safety inspections during a pandemic;

A president who protects seniors would not oppose voting by mail and

would not force them to leave their homes, often while under a shelter in place order, and risk infection to cast their ballots;

A president who protects seniors would move to prevent drug corporations from profiteering from COVID-19 treatments or vaccines;

A president who protects seniors would have acted to lower drug prices. Just in 2020, the average price increase for prescription drugs is 5%. Instead of taking strong action to rein in pharmaceutical corporations, President Trump promised to veto H.R. 3, a bill passed by the House of Representatives requiring Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices and apply those lower prices to the private sector. That bill also caps out-of-pocket spending for Medicare beneficiaries;

A president who protects seniors would not have issued a budget to cut \$845 billion from Medicare over 10 years, and told allies that gutting Medicare could be a good ‘second-term project’;

A president who protects seniors would not seek to undermine Social Security by eliminating the payroll tax, Social Security’s dedicated funding stream, which threatens the earned

benefits of current and future retirees – all Americans will lose the bedrock of their retirement;

A president who protects seniors would expand Social Security and increase benefits by eliminating the cap on earnings subject to the Social Security payroll tax so that the wealthiest Americans would pay their fair share into the system;

A president who protects seniors would not tell a business cable news reporter that ‘Social Security and Medicare Cuts Will Be On the Table at the End of This Year’;

A president who protects seniors would not be gutting the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which provides free annual wellness checks and screenings and drug coverage for individuals who fall in the doughnut hole. The ACA also provides critical protections for people with pre-existing health conditions; at least 25% of people 50-64 years old have one or more pre-existing conditions;

May is Older Americans Month. What older Americans would like to hear later today is that he will reverse course and protect their health and retirement security, but we are not hopeful.



Local 249 activists organized a birthday parade for quarantined kids on April 26. Photo by Gary Thomas.

# 249 brings birthday joy to quarantined kids

By Gwen Starkey

**N**o matter what your age is, a birthday is a day we all want to celebrate. We gather around with our friends and family to blow out candles on a spectacular cake and open much-anticipated presents, except this year, your special day happens to fall during these unprecedented times of a major pandemic, the Corona Virus, the dreaded Covid19.

Nobody likes to eat cake alone, much less so after you've been quarantined for over a month staring at those same four walls. So, when the call came out for help, UAW Local 249 members jumped into action by organizing a birthday car parade for members and their families and those in our communities.

Chairperson of the Education Committee Gary Thomas set in motion what would eventually turn into a 50 car line up that would last nearly five hours and cover over 150 miles in several communities in our area. On April 26, over 50 vehicles lined up at the union hall and began their journey.

"I put a message out on social media and got quite a response," Thomas said. "Several standing committee members participated. We traveled from Excelsior Springs to Buckner covering 15 different neighborhoods spreading joy and community spirit."

William Dinwiddie, a seven-year member who works as a utility on B-Crew in Truck Body was responsible for organizing parade participants and mapping out the route. "It was great. We spread community cheer and unionism during this horrific time that this pandemic caused. Everyone

was so stressed, that we just wanted to spread some cheer. We have the best members who are more than willing to participate and do pretty much anything we ask of them. It was an awesome event."

The cars were decorated with happy birthday messages, flags and balloons. Folks threw out candy, revved engines and honked horns. They made such a ruckus that entire neighborhoods came out to see what all the commotion was about. One vehicle in particular was a standout hit of the parade. The green low-rider 1987 Buick Regal owned by Gino Rios, a 20 year Local 249 member who works in Truck Chassis on the Day shift.

"I've owned this car for about four years and it definitely gets a lot of attention," Rios said. It's a three-wheel motion, he says, that moves up and down and side to side and he has switches to control all the movements. He loves to show off his car.

"It sits in the garage a lot," Rios said, "but when I get it out, it's fun to drive. It's good to see the kids get all excited about seeing a car that can do that. It's not that often that you see a car drive on three wheels." Fun as it is to drive,

he says, the ride is awful, worst ride ever. I guess that's the price he pays to entertain us.

On the other side of this vehicle parade were those they came to celebrate. The one or two houses along the parade route that were their birthday destinations turned into entire neighborhoods coming out to enjoy the festivities.

Stephanie Shines, a Local 249 member who works on the night shift in Transit Body shop was one of the lucky homeowners on the parade route that came through Gladstone. Her two sons, Anthony who turned 23 and works in the plant on the B-Crew in Truck Chassis, and Cameron who turned 21 had birthdays in April. They all enjoyed the parade and thought it was awesome.

"We had been in the house for at least three weeks straight," Shines said. "It was a breath of fresh air to come out and see some people. Everyone was excited, waving and hollering. We didn't realize how much we missed being in the presence of others. All our neighbors turned out and it was just really exciting. Gary Thomas really outdid himself on this event. He greeted everyone on the way out thanking them and showing us so much love. That was so nice."

His team put so much work into this event that it motivated Shines to want to pay it forward and get involved in the next car parade.

As the parade made its way through the Liberty area, they went into the neighborhood of Angela Plummer's daughter's home. Plummer, a four year Local 249 member, works night shift on the Transit side said she saw the ad that Gary Thomas placed on the KCAP social media page and messaged him.

"I would love for you guys to drive by and celebrate our birthdays with us," Plummer said. "It was wonderful. My grandson Roman was turning one and my daughter Sierra was going to be 15 and they loved the attention. There was a car that was on hydraulics and it popped up and it was on its side and the kids were so amazed by this car. They all threw out candy and all of our neighborhood kids came out when they heard all the noise and commotion. What a great day."

What started out as a 15-house car parade really morphed into a total neighborhood community event. It was easy to pull off because the roads were clear as everyone was staying indoors. "It never ceases to amaze me the heart and soul of our membership at Local 249," Gary Thomas said. "It felt really good to see the kids understand that their parents work with people who care about them."

Local 249 members always step up to the plate when it comes to interaction within the community and we all should be proud to be a part of such a great organization.