

FIRST LOCAL NEWS

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

December 2020

All-Electric
Ford
Transit to
be built at
KCAP | 5

Putting 2020
in the rearview
mirror | 9

Local 249
serves
veterans at St.
Michaels | 7



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Aerospace and Agricultural Workers Local 249
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The Shaver family, April, left to right, Daniel, Kai and Ethan, dressed as Carole Baskin, The Tiger King, and their cubs, enjoyed the second annual Trunk or Treat Halloween party held Oct. 24 at Local 249's parking lot. April is the daughter of Local 249 retiree activists Troy and Gwen Starkey.



Members of Local 249's Veterans Committee, Demetris Camp, David Cox, Lou Davidson and Diane Bell prepare Thanksgiving dinner for residents of St. Michael's Veterans Center, which provides housing and support for homeless veterans in the Kansas City area. Photo by Don Lehman.



Local 249 member Tyrone Shirley won the James "Frog" Moran Solidarity Award presented by the Education Committee at the November membership meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.



Local 249 volunteers load 750 turkeys to provide Thanksgiving dinner to needy families in the Kansas City area. 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).

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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

Apprentice Training

Cortez Bradley 816-459-2060

Benefits

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

Employee Involvement

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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

Kelly Loveall 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

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Biden administration must strongly advocate for working people

Thea M. Lee
Economic Policy Institute

Now that the 2020 presidential election is finally decided, working people can look forward to a moment of hope and opportunity. In January, Americans will have a president and vice president who have pledged to prioritize the needs of working families. Despite extraordinary and unconscionable efforts to silence voters, the democratic process has prevailed in the most important election of our lifetime.

President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris won on a platform that addresses the urgent needs of working people. EPI has long called for policies that would shift bargaining power back toward workers, curb accelerating income inequality, shore up the nation's infrastructure and educational systems, protect and expand social insurance programs, and help close gender and racial wage gaps.

We look forward to working closely with the incoming administration to systematically undo the harm caused by the Trump administration—and to build an economy that works for everyone in America, elevates the contributions of working people, and is committed to addressing and reversing systemic racism.

Many elections across the country demonstrated that progressive, pro-worker policies are not just good economics, but also can be electoral

winners. By overwhelming margins, Florida residents voted to raise the state's minimum wage to \$15 an hour, and Colorado residents voted for a 12-week paid family and medical leave program. As EPI's work has shown, the progressive agenda is both popular and necessary for a robust and fair economic recovery at this precarious moment in history.

We encourage the incoming administration and Congress to focus on building worker power, fighting for racial justice, and making the transformational changes we need to invest in America, including through clean energy and other forms of climate crisis mitigation, public health, the care economy, the immigration system, and public education. This is not a time for timidity or austerity. This is a time for courage and ambition, and we are ready to work with Congress and the incoming administration to achieve the changes our country needs.

Tell the Senate to pass the PRO Act

The PRO Act addresses several major problems with the current law and tries to give working people a fair shot when they try to join together with their coworkers to form a union and bargain for better wages, benefits, and conditions at their workplaces. It provides:

- Stronger and swifter remedies when employers interfere with workers' rights
- More freedom to organize without employer interference.
- Requires employers to bargain in good faith with the union chosen by their employees and protects strikes and other protest activity.

Labor News From the World Wide Web

The Picket Line

UAW, KCK firefighters picket city hall

Firefighters in KCK picketed city hall Friday, voicing concerns about the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and response times following the closure of Fire Station 15 in the Fairfax Industrial District.

Members of the KCKFD Local 64 and UAW Local 31 carried signs that said, "The city is burning us now! Are you next?" outside of city hall.

In July, the Unified Government Commission voted to relocate a fire company from the fire station in Fairfax to a new fire station in the Piper area. A UG spokesperson says the new fire station in Piper serves more than 2,000 new rooftops. "Long, long overdue to provide better coverage out there," International Association of Firefighters Local 64 President J.J. Simma said. — *KCPT*

National Fight Over Who Is Counted In Voting Districts May Arise From Missouri

Voters in Missouri have approved amending their state constitution with a subtle change that could spark a national legal fight over who is counted in voting districts.

That fight, however, could be stemmed if President-elect Joe Biden reverses the Trump administration's directives for the Census Bureau to produce the citizenship data needed to carry out a radically different way of redrawing maps that determine the areas state lawmakers represent.

In general, political mapmakers around the country have long drawn state legislative districts once a decade based on the total number of people living in an area as determined by the latest census results.

With the support of more than 51% of those who voted on the Missouri ballot measure, Republican state lawmakers have changed redistricting requirements so that going forward districts have to "be drawn on the basis of one person, one vote," according to the newly-passed Amendment 3. — *Hansi Lo Wang | NPR*

UAW calls for strong agenda for autoworkers

"UAW members look forward to working with President-Elect Joe Biden, who has been a friend of UAW members and labor since his earliest days as a Senator in Delaware.

It is time for us all as Americans, and as UAW members, to put aside our differences and unify on the hard work that lay ahead. Our members, our families and our communities are hurting in this pandemic and with economic challenges, health care challenges and workplace rights and safety challenges as union members. These are the issues that unite us as union members regardless of who is in power in the White House, in Congress or our Courts.

Now we must look to ourselves to set an example and to work as one nation, under God, united and indivisible as we work for an end to this pandemic and a brighter future for our members, their families and their communities." — *UAW*

'Virus is winning,' Missouri task force warns

Top St. Louis-area medical leaders on Friday implored Missouri Gov. Mike Parson to take action before the coronavirus pandemic reaches such proportions that hospitals no longer have room to care for the sick.

Dr. Alex Garza, head of the St. Louis Metropolitan Pandemic Task Force, warned that, if things don't change, the regional health care system will be overwhelmed in two weeks, with no backup in sight.

"We're at war. And right here, right now, the virus is winning that war," Garza said. "It will take significant and decisive action through individual acts and determined public policy to get us through."

Parson responded, urging Missourians to "take personal responsibility," ... but he steered clear of a mandate. — *St. Louis Post Dispatch*

Auto Industry Update

Ford to focus on affordable EVs

Ford CEO Jim Farley foreshadowed what we should expect from the automaker in the years to come during a call with investors. The strategy not only relies on affordable EVs for drivers, but also leans heavily on battery-powered commercial vehicles. On the private ownership side of things, he ruled out sky-high price tags. “We are not going after the \$100,000-plus market. These are affordable vehicles,” the CEO said on the call.

With a wide range of price points, Farley added the automaker expects future EVs to account for over 10% of the company’s revenue in the future. Ford’s been far more restrained with its electrification strategy as rivals, like General Motors, trumpet an all-electric future day in and out. But, make no mistake, the EVs are coming from Ford as well. — *Sean Szymkowski | CNet*

Automakers report blockbuster profits despite pandemic economy

The auto industry is roaring back far sooner than expected in the latest sign of the economy’s two-track recovery.

Major auto manufacturers have been raking in money this past quarter as consumers who can afford it show unexpectedly strong appetite for expensive new vehicles.

Companies such as Ford, General Motors, Fiat Chrysler, Daimler and BMW reported impressive earnings in the period between July to September, surpassing their pre-pandemic performance in many key metrics. Honda and Toyota raised their profit forecasts sharply.

It’s a remarkable turnaround for an industry that just a few months ago was facing a grim outlook. Plants around the world were shut down this spring to stop the spread of the coronavirus. — *Camila Domonoske | NPR*

Ford Motor Co. reports \$2.4 billion net income in third quarter

Ford Motor Co., fresh with new leadership and touting an upcoming lineup of hot new vehicles, reported a \$2.4 billion net income Wednesday for the third quarter of the year, an improvement of \$2 billion from the same quarter last year.

Ford reported that earnings in the quarter before interest and taxes — adjusted EBIT — was \$3.6 billion, up from the \$1.8 billion reported for the same period in 2019 and \$1.7 billion a year earlier. EBIT does not include restructuring and other charges.

“We plan to compete like a challenger,” CFO John Lawler said on a media call.

From the factory floor to Wall Street, people have noticed Ford is under new management and they seem pretty happy about it.

CEO Jim Farley and Lawler, who started as a team on Oct. 1, have restored confidence in the 117-year-old company among industry observers as well as UAW members and car dealers. — *Phoebe Wall Howard | Detroit Free Press*

Auto profits abound in third quarter thanks to strong truck, SUV sales

The Detroit Three all saw their net incomes finish the quarter in the black and exceed analysts’ expectations. General Motors reported a profit of \$4 billion, which is a 74 percent jump from the third quarter of last year. Similarly, Ford brought in \$2.4 billion in profit over the quarter, up from \$423 million a year ago. Fiat Chrysler’s earnings report yielded similar results with a reported \$1.4 billion in profit as compared to a loss of \$200 million last year, the result of one-time expenses. — *Colin Beresford | Car and Driver*

AutoTechNews: The EV/AV future is now

Ford’s self-driving cars are really good, but are they good enough to win?

Ford’s self-driving vehicles deftly handled a variety of challenging scenarios that have been known to trip up even the most skilled AVs, from unprotected left-hand turns, to construction zones, to narrow, two-way roads without lane markings. The car rode confidently alongside other drivers, braked for pedestrians, and inched its way assertively into intersections. The only time the vehicle seemed confused was when a passing flatbed truck kicked up an enormous cloud of dust, forcing the safety driver to momentarily take control.

Ford’s plan ... will involve up to 100,000 self-driving cars — with no steering wheel, accelerator, or brake pedal — operating in multiple U.S. cities, delivering people and packages around the clock. The event in Miami was designed to leave one with the impression that Ford is approaching this challenge cautiously and deliberately. And it did that. — *Andrew J. Hawkins | The Verge*

Yellowstone National Park plans test of self-driving shuttles to ease traffic jams

An autonomous vehicle company that has been working in Central Florida will deploy shuttles in Yellowstone National Park in spring 2021.

Beep will test its electric AV shuttles in Yellowstone to support the National Park Service’s goal of reducing the environmental impact of visitors while still

keeping the park accessible to the public. Traffic in the park has gone up almost 40% over the last 12 years. This caused traffic jams, erosion, damage to vegetation, and trash problems at busy restrooms. The park service is looking at alternatives to private vehicles to solve these problems.

Joe Moyer, Beep CEO, said in a press release that Yellowstone’s Visitor Use Management Program aligns with Beep’s mission to provide alternative, sustainable, and innovative transportation solutions meant to improve mobility.

“This demonstration will help assess how emerging technologies can enhance the visitor experience while making the roads safer and less congested for everyone,” he said.

Beep also provides shuttles on the Mayo Clinic campus in Jacksonville. — *Veronica Combs | Tech Republic*

Who is legally liable for accidents caused by autonomous vehicles?

The development and mass production of self-driving cars, also known as autonomous vehicles, has the potential to revolutionize transportation mobility and safety. Currently, motor vehicle operating laws, impaired driving laws, insurance laws and most other laws addressing the operation of vehicles in every state are premised on a significant assumption—that a human is behind the wheel, operating the vehicle. State lawmakers around the country are considering the ramifications of driverless cars, including how existing laws and systems may need to be modified in order to facilitate the implementation of this new technology. — *National Council of State Legislatures*

THE ALL-ELECTRIC FORD TRANSIT IS COMING TO KCAP



Ford Motor Company announced Nov. 10 that the Kansas City Assembly Plant will build the all-new E-Transit van, part of a more than \$3.2 billion investment in Ford's North American manufacturing facilities to produce a series of new electric vehicles for commercial and retail customers.

The new E-Transit will join the all-electric F-150 announced in September and the all-electric Mustang Mach-E, which begins arriving in dealers' showrooms next month. The new entries support Ford's plan to electrify its iconic and most popular vehicles, including its commercial vehicles. The all-electric F-150, which will be assembled at the new Rouge Electric Vehicle Center in Dearborn, Mich., arrives in mid-2022. The E-Transit arrives in late 2021.

"The E-Transit Van is expected to create approximately 150 new jobs at KCAP," says UAW Local 249 Bargaining Chair Jim Fisher.

In fact, the 5-bay facility expansion is already under way and should be ready in Aug. 2021 for the 2022 E-Transit model, according to Fisher.

"Ford's decision to insource the E-Transit here in Kansas City is a great tribute to hard work and commitment of Local 249 members," says Fisher.

Ford's is building out its manufacturing footprint across North America – working with local and national governments – to lead the transition to electric vehicles and meet consumer demand in the coming years. Electric vehicles are a key part of Ford's commitment meet the requirements of the Paris Accord and achieve carbon

neutrality globally by 2050.

The UAW said Ford's investment shows its commitment to producing cars in the United States and retaining jobs.

"Today's announcement realigns commitments made during contract negotiations in 2019," said Brian Rothenberg, spokesman for the UAW. "It is a credit to our members' hard work and quality craftsmanship that no plants lose any production capacity or jobs during the realignment. We are encouraged that planned new jobs created and overall job commitments continue on track at the levels that were negotiated in 2019's Collective Bargaining Agreement."

"We're taking our most iconic vehicles and using fully electric technology to deliver even more performance, productivity and capability for customers," said Kumar Galhotra, president, Americas and International Markets Group. "We are building out the North American manufacturing footprint to support this growth. This is just the first chapter with more new electric vehicles and more investment to come."

Ford is investing an additional \$100 million in its Kansas City plant and adding approximately 150 full-time permanent jobs to build the E-Transit,

a zero-emissions version of Transit, America's best-selling commercial van.

The all-electric E-Transit will be unveiled Thursday and arrives in late 2021. The electric van investment in Kansas City is in addition to the \$300 million Ford invested for the launch this year of the all-new F-150 at that plant. The plant employs approximately 7,500 workers.

E-Transit is part of Ford's more than \$11.5 billion global investment in electrification through 2022.

"Ford's strategy is different – we are delivering affordable, capable electric vehicles in the heart of the retail and commercial market rather than six-figure status vehicles," Galhotra said. "With the stunning Mustang Mach-E SUV, an all-electric F-150 and the new E-Transit, our first wave of EVs in North America will introduce a whole new generation to EVs."

Ford is also investing approximately \$150 million in Van Dyke Transmission Plant in Southeast Michigan to build e-motors and e-transaxles beginning in 2021. This will retain 225 jobs at the plant.

Given the strong early interest in Ford's all-electric F-150 since the September announcement, Ford is now increasing production plans by 50 percent versus original plans. To deliver more fully electric trucks, Ford will add 200 new jobs in addition to the 300 jobs previously announced for the

new electric F-150.

Ford spends more than \$5 billion annually on engineering in America, which includes the development of the all-new, fully electric Transit, the F-150, and the all-new Mustang Mach-E.

"We are investing heavily in our vehicle programs as well as building out our manufacturing capabilities," said Hau Thai-Tang, chief product platform and operations officer. "This will allow us to scale quickly as customer interest in these new products grows."

In addition to electric vehicle manufacturing sites for trucks and vans in the U.S., the company also is investing C\$1.8 billion (U.S. \$1.35 billion) to transform its Oakville Assembly Complex in Ontario starting in 2024 to include next-generation battery-electric vehicles. It will mark the first time ever that an automaker has produced full BEVs in Canada for the North American market.

Ford also is planning to produce an additional electrified vehicle at its plant in Cuautitlan, Mexico, where the Mustang Mach-E is produced. The new vehicle will share a similar electrified platform as the Mustang Mach-E, delivering manufacturing and engineering efficiencies.

"Our electric vehicle business is a dynamic source of growth," says John Savona, vice president, North American manufacturing. "We're setting ourselves up for profitable business now and in the future."

Biden won, now what?

By Pat Hayes

Joe Biden won, and he won big. He got 80,025,947 votes, the most ever cast for a winning presidential candidate. Biden beat Trump by more than 6 million votes nationally. His winning percentage is the highest for any challenger since Franklin Delano Roosevelt's landslide victory in 1932.

Biden's victory in Michigan was due in large part to the efforts of the UAW while the broader labor movement was key to retaking Wisconsin and Pennsylvania.

An AFL-CIO post-election survey shows union members went 58 percent for Joe Biden and Kamala Harris. While the general public supported Biden by just three points, union members favored him by 21 points.

"Joe Biden's firewall was union made," AFL-CIO President Rich Trumka told unionists in a post-election speech.

While Biden won, the question many in the labor movement are asking themselves now, is whether his victory will prove to be a victory for the working people who put him in office, as well.

Certainly, a Biden presidency will end the relentless attacks launched on labor by the Trump administration.

Trump promised to make America great again, but his policies once in office were designed to make unions small.

During his time in office, Trump packed the courts with anti-labor

judges whose "right to work for less" rulings weakened unions by increasing the number of freeloaders.

He changed the rules about who qualifies for overtime pay, making more than 8 million workers ineligible and costing them over \$1 billion per year in lost wages.

He broke his campaign promise to take on companies that move good jobs overseas—instead, he's given over \$115 billion in federal contracts to companies that are offshoring jobs.

Worst of all, in the midst of a pandemic that has so far killed more than 250,000 Americans, Trump failed to secure enough Personal Protective Equipment for essential workers during the COVID-19 crisis and weakened protections for workers who are concerned about working in unsafe environments.

We can be sure that these direct attacks on workers will end with Trump's decisive defeat, but can we expect more than benign neglect from the Biden administration?

We have to face facts, greedy cor-



President-elect Joe Biden joined striking UAW workers on the picket line at the GM Fairfax Plant in Kansas City, Kansas last year. Photo by Pat Hayes.

porations have destroyed good jobs, attacked unions and devastated communities under both Democratic and Republican administrations.

Will Biden seek to implement the same kind of corporate-friendly policies as previous Democratic presidents Obama and Clinton or will he break with the policies that hurt American workers and cost Democrats the 2016 election?

Biden has appointed more than

two dozen labor leaders to agency review teams as part of his transition. Soon after the election, he met with labor leaders, including UAW President Rory Gamble.

While early indications point to an increased role for working Americans and their unions in the Biden administration, continued activism and mobilization are the only guarantees that workers' voices will be heard and policies enacted to rebuild union power.

Biden to CEOs: "I want you to know I'm a union guy."

UAW President Rory L. Gamble met remotely with leaders from other unions, businesses and President-elect Biden and Vice President-elect Harris Nov. 16. He issued the following statement:

"I want to thank President-elect Biden and Vice President-elect Harris for convening this important meeting today. Our nation and economy are at a crucial point right now given the rise in COVID-19 cases. Today's discussion among labor and business leaders was a productive and honest discussion of the challenges we all face in manufacturing and business to wrestle control of a very difficult situation for our economy.

The UAW has had productive ongoing discussions with our Detroit-3 counterparts and other employers about protocols to keep our economy moving and at the same time make tough decisions to protect UAW members and all working Americans. But we all expressed today to the incom-

ing administration an acute need for an immediate economic package for those hard hit by this pandemic, help for our states and our frontline providers and specifically to protect the health and safety of UAW members in the workplace. Testing, PPE equipment, and a plan for distribution for a vaccine, when available, are crucial as is the ability for workers, management and government to work together through this pandemic nimbly and efficiently in order to save lives.

I also expressed how much UAW members are working hard to do their part and follow protocols not just in the workplace but in their homes and communities as well. Together we all need to be ready for the difficult yet lifesaving decisions that lay ahead."



President-elect Joe Biden met with labor leaders, including UAW President Rory Gamble, and the chief executives of major tech, retail and auto companies Nov. 16. "Unions are going to have increased power in my administration," said Biden. CNBC



Local 249 Veterans Committee members, Diane Bell, front row left to right, Demetris Camp, Hans Beebe, David Cox, Lou Davidson, Chris Jurgenson and Dave Grant prepared Thanksgiving dinners for residents of St. Michaels Veteran's Center Nov. 14. Photo by Don Lehman.

Local 249 serves veterans at St. Michaels

By Gwen Starkey

This has been a roller coaster of a year and one that nobody will look fondly back on thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic and the unprecedented closures and social distancing that has kept us all in a bubble. In retrospect, hindsight isn't 20/20 as no one could have predicted this, but that only changed the way in which UAW Local 249 went about their normal charitable events. They became creative. They improvised, they overcame, they adapted, and they persevered.

As the months of November and December are typically when Local 249 ramps up their community altruism, the Veterans home of St. Michaels was first on their list. St. Michaels is a permanent housing nonprofit organization for Kansas City's homeless veterans, helping them reintegrate into the community. On Nov. 14, UAW Local 249's Veteran's Committee hosted their third annual pre-Thanksgiving dinner for the 125 veterans that reside at the center.

Normally, they host a big sit down dinner and everyone enjoys fellowship, camaraderie and solidarity, but not this time. "This year was an obstacle for us because of COVID," Chairperson of the Veteran's Committee Dave Grant said. However, they didn't let that stop them he said. Where there is a will, there is a way. "We were still successful in getting it done," Grant said. "We just decided to set up our tents outside and work

around it."

HyVee catered the event and the committee dished up 125 meals with all the fixings including turkey, ham, stuffing, mashed potatoes, pumpkin pie, cupcakes and cookies. "We put the meals in grocery carts and members and social workers of St. Michaels personally knocked on every door and delivered a warm meal to residents so they wouldn't have to come outside," Grant said. This actually worked out pretty well as several of the veterans were ill or had other medical issues and the weather wasn't cooperating that day.

"We still pulled it off, but it definitely was not the same as last year," Grant said. "We are thankful that Local 249 Veteran's Committee could do this and everyone at St. Michaels was very happy."

This is the 2nd year that the Vet-

eran's Committee joined the Motorcycle Committee in their national event, Wreaths Across America, which is scheduled for Dec 19. They will be meeting at the Terrace Park Cemetery in Kansas City at 10am to place wreaths on every veteran's grave.

In the spring, they plan another 30/30 gun giveaway, which is 30 guns given away in 30 days. "Last year's raffle was such a great success that we've decided to do it again," Grant said. "We will be selling 1000 tickets that cost \$30 each and once all the tickets have been sold we will go off Missouri Lottery's Pick3 evening drawing of the day. Even if you win the first day, your name stays in the drawing all month long. Essentially, you have the chance to win multiple times if your number matches the pick 3."

Region 4 also has a gun calendar program that begins Jan 4, 2021. You can purchase a calendar for \$30 and have the chance each week to win a gun, once you have sent in your registration form. There will be two winners drawn each week. For every 100 calendars that Local 249 sells, Region 4 gives them a shotgun to give away. Details on giveaways will be upcoming. Please contact the union hall or Dave

Grant for more information. All monies raised from the sale of the calendar goes right back to the Veteran's and Motorcycle Committees.

"Covid has really put a damper on the things that we were able to accomplish this year," Grant said. "Hopefully in 2021, we will have a better year. Our big fundraiser is the fireworks tent that we have in the union hall parking lot and this year sales were great. If you can say anything good about Covid it's that people purchased more fireworks than ever since the big shows were cancelled. Money raised from firework sales enables us to do good things within our community."

"What we do, we do for our veterans that have served our country," Grant says. "We always keep our veterans in mind. They signed a blank check to give up their life, if they had to, for their country." He has a favorite quote from Robert F Kennedy that says, "Some men see things as they are, and ask why. I dream of things that never were, and ask why not."

The members of the Veteran's Committee thank you for your support throughout the year and wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.



UAW Local 249 members brought their children to Local 249's Trunk or Treat Halloween celebration Oct. 24. The event, moved outdoors this year as a precaution against COVID-19, is sponsored by the Womens' Committee. Photo by Don Lehman.

They did the monster mash at Local 249

By Gwen Starkey

Cold weather and COVID-19 couldn't keep these cool cats and kittens from coming out to partake in the cauldrons of candy that abounded at the second annual UAW Local 249 Halloween Trunk or Treat party sponsored by the Women's Committee. The event, held outdoors at the union hall's parking lot on Oct. 24, was dreamt up last year when the possibility of a strike loomed over our local forcing committee members to come up with a different idea to keep the long tradition going of hosting a Halloween party for the children of Local 249. It was an overwhelming success.

The original Trunk or Treat was held at the Pleasant Valley City Hall parking lot, but with the National Contract signed, we thought things would go back to normal, that was until COVID-19 struck in February and hasn't let loose its grip since then. COVID-19's social distancing restrictions limited the amount of people that could meet in a small indoor area so the decision was made to start a new tradition at Local 249 with a second annual Trunk or Treat held outside in the parking lot.

"Although it was quite chilly, the Halloween Trunk or Treat parking lot party was a big success," Chairperson

of the Women's Committee Karen Mahoney said. "We had an excellent turnout." About 300 kids showed up with their families in tow to sample the treats at each trunk station, and there were many to visit.

As the line snaked around the parking lot with music blaring out scary tunes, kids met Inspector Gadget aka Shirley Mata, Fat Thor AKA Gary Thomas, Hocus Pocus aka Karen Mahoney, and numerous other ghouls, goblins, skeletons, pirates, and scary folks handing out delicious treats. There was a witch, aka Cindy Hewitt, her face all painted green, perched in the bed of a black

F-150 that shot candy down a 6-foot chute with a fire-breathing dragon sitting beside her. Snakes, skulls, demons whose eyes lit up, pumpkins and a huge white ghost that floated eerily around behind her as she cackled to those brave enough to ask for treats. Come here my pretties. Cindy and her husband Chris really outdid themselves. "We have been doing this for a long time," Cindy Hewitt said. "My husband works at Ford and we are part of the union family. We just love doing this."

"This is our first time doing this as parents," April Shaver said. "Both of my parents work for Ford and I remember coming here as a kid and how much fun it was. I wanted my kids to have the same memories that I have doing all the fun events that the local puts on." April and her husband Daniel came as Carole Baskin and Joe Exotic and brought their pet tigers, Ethan, age 8, and Kai, age 2, to join in the festivities. Everyone went home with buckets full of pencils, snakes, stickers and gobs

of candy. "I'm going to have to hide my candy so my dad won't sneak any," Ethan Shaver said with his sly tiger grin.

John and Michelle Acton brought their beautiful blue 1936 Ford and gave out goodies. "We like to see all the kids and since we figured that our neighborhood wouldn't be celebrating, we decided to come here again," John Acton said. This is their second time joining the Trunk or Treat party.

The Pleasant Valley Fire Department came roaring in with their lights and sirens blaring giving the kids an up-close peek at the inside of their unit. It was a fan favorite. There were spiders perched in their webs waiting to pounce on unsuspecting revelers and a typewriter with a hidden hand that reached out to grab anyone who dared to type a message. "All in all I think the kids had a great time," Karen Mahoney said. "It's something our entire committee enjoys doing and I want to thank everyone who participated and came out on such a cold night."

Putting 2020 in the rearview mirror

By Jim Fisher

We have finally reached December of 2020. It is hard to remember that the year started off in February with our Kansas City Chiefs winning the Super Bowl. By March, our lives were all dramatically different. Looking back over this past year during a global pandemic a lot has changed, not only for our members, but for how business is performed inside our facility. Never could we have expected that 2020 would bring not only our plant, but all major automotive manufacturing to a screeching halt for two months. We returned to work with precautions such as temperature scanning and masks, we had learned new catchphrases such as social distancing and return to work playbook, and daily life hasn't been the same since.

I personally want to thank our Bargaining Committee, our elected and appointed reps, and our membership for all of your dedication this year. 2020 was not easy on anyone, but as a Local I'm very proud of all your accomplishments this year. We know members did not like some of the changes, but that didn't stop our membership from re-tuning to work continuing to prove we are the best work force in the industry.

As the country changed to dependence on delivery vehicles our Transit Vans were in the highest demand ever, and the F-150 continued to be in very high demand.

The plant was behind schedule due to the two-month shutdown. Local 249 members broke every record for production in the Third Quarter by producing 144,551 units. As Ford works to recover and get back to profitably, everyone needs to know that Local 249 members lead the way. Without our members the company would be in a very different position.

With all the attention going to COVID there have been some very large projects going on in 2020 that give our members and plant a secure footing in job security and product commitments going into the future. For the first time ever the Stamping Plant has begun producing production parts for the F-150.

The Transit Van will create and addition 150 jobs with the official announcement the that Electric Transit will be produced at KCAP. In addition, and an additional 66 new jobs are being created for sorting work that Local 249 members will be performing in a new building off 210 Highway starting in early 2021.

The Local Safety Team worked hard over the summer in making conditions improved during the hot summer months. They worked on providing 42 refrigerators over the summer to keep cold water on the floor. During the summer months over 600,000 bottles of water were distributed. The equals about 80,000 gallons of water.

They continued to make sure all the ice chests were fully stocked.

There have been some other notable changes that took place over 2020. Eleven new ice machines have been added to the plant, and skilled trades is working on installing eight AQUA stations that will also help provide ice year-round. All our in-progression and legacy members received pay raises in 2020. The Local had over 30 tarps removed that were no longer required due to roof repairs being completed. There were 24 TFT's that were converted to full time this year.

The Local wrote Health & Safety grievances on the North Parking Lot, and this fall MODOT completed a project to expand the drainage ditch off the highway, in addition the company also added four additional drainage areas to remove water off the north lot before it reaches the turnstiles. Three additional entrance/exit doors were added to the Q-52 entrance. Our skilled trades are currently working installing additional Big Ass Fans to the main building. They have either completed or are completing the final steps on an additional 30 fans in the Main Building and Truck Body Shop in 2020.

I also want to provide an update



Local 249 Bargaining Chair Jim Fisher reported that KCAP will add 150 new jobs to build the E-Transit. Construction of the 5-bay expansion for the new E-Transit is underway and is expected to be complete by August 2021. Photo by Don Lehman.

on the Skilled Trades schedule. Originally, the company announced they would be putting in a rotational skilled trades schedule on the truck side. After several meetings with the company, it has now been announced the Skilled Trades will be returning their D&E Crew along with two swing shifts. The Skilled Trade Union Reps have started the process of completing their surveys, and the new schedule will go into effect on January 11.

The local union is still not satisfied that plant management is following the expectations of the Return-to-Work Playbook, and the Leadership Team will continue to be walking the floor addressing concerns and writing Health

& Safety grievances where applicable. Team Solutions has created a hotline for restroom cleanliness at (816) 414-5610 or plant extension 5610 from inside the facility. Plant Medical has also created a COVID Hotline number at 1 (816) 459-1437.

As we get ready for a new year, we expect to have several significant announcements in 2021. Starting off with the Local has begun the process of adding a full time union rep back in for our C Crew members. We will provide more information once we have all the details lined out.

With the upcoming holidays we ask everyone to still be mindful of all the practices in place with COVID.

Wages for the top 1% skyrocketed 160% since 1979 while the share of wages for the bottom 90% shrunk

Newly available wage data tell a familiar story: In every period since 1979, wages for the bottom 90% were continuously redistributed upward to the top 10% and frequently to the very highest 1.0% and 0.1%.

For last year, 2019, the data show a continuation, with annual wages rising fastest for those in the top 10% while those in the bottom 90% saw below-average wage growth.

This unceasing growth of wage inequality that undercuts wage growth for the bottom 90% reaffirms the need to place generating robust wage growth for the vast majority and rebuilding worker power at the center

of economic policymaking.

A similar pattern as in 2019 prevailed over the entire 2007–2019 business cycle as wages were redistributed in two ways, up from the bottom 90% to the top 10% and within the top 10% from the top 1% to those in the remaining 9% of the top 10%. Still, the top 1% has done far better in the 2009–2019 recovery (wages rose 20.4%) than did those in the bottom 90% (wages rose only 8.7%).

The top 1% and the very top, those in the top 0.1%, were the clear winners over the longer-term.

- The top 1.0% saw their wages grow by 160.3%; and wages for the top 0.1% grew more than twice as fast, up a spectacular 345.2%.

- In contrast, those in the bottom 90% had annual wages grow by 26.0% from 1979 to 2019.

This disparity in wage growth reflects a sharp long-term rise in the share of total wages earned by those in the top 1.0% and 0.1%. — *EPI*

The good, bad and ugly of the 2020 election

By Jason Starr

The votes have been counted and the 2020 election decided. Joe Biden will be inaugurated president on Jan. 20, 2021. His election means that the vicious attacks on working people and their unions by Trump and his cronies will end. That is good, but we will still have maintain our activism to put pressure on the Biden administration to reverse decades of bad policies by both parties that have driven America's working class to the brink.

Biden won 81,012,489 votes — the highest number of popular votes of any presidential candidate in history. He beat Trump handily 51.3% to 47% and took 306 electoral votes. Working people were key to the Biden victory. Some 59% of union members voted for Joe Biden and Kamala Harris.

Here in Missouri, our candidate, Nicole Galloway lost. Republicans hold the governorship and veto-proof majorities in both the house and senate and renewed attacks on the rights of working people have already begun.

Despite an overwhelming rejection of right to work by Missouri voters in 2018, anti-worker Republican Jered Taylor has already pre-filed House Bill 87, a right-to-work bill designed to weaken union representation in the workplace.

Justin Hill, another anti-worker Republican, has pre-filed House Bill 215 to cut the number of weeks laid off workers can collect unemployment benefits even though a similar bill passed by Republicans in 2015 was ruled unconstitutional.

His bill would also tamper with federal unemployment benefits paid to laid off workers during the COVID-19

pandemic under the CARES Act, as well as lower employer contributions to the unemployment compensation fund.

Likewise, House Bill 88, a new attempt to enact paycheck deception — unfair regulations targeting unions — has been pre-filed by Jered Taylor, as well.

Republican sneering at the will of Missouri voters is hitting a new low with maneuvers to undermine Medicaid expansion initiative approved by voters in August. Passage of the Medicaid expansion initiative requires the Legislature to put a program in place during its 2021 session, which begins next month.

However, the Republican-dominated Legislature is fiercely opposed expanding the public health for low-income Missourians, and lawmakers are expected to introduce measures to limit who can access coverage despite the fact that Missouri is one of the hottest spots in a global pandemic.

Having repeated won re-election and held their majorities while ignoring or undermining the will of the majority in the state, Republicans must feel especially smug that the successful passage of the "Dirty Missouri" ballot



Local 249 President Jason Starr reported on the results of the 2020 election at the November membership meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

measure will allow them to continue to gerrymander voting districts throughout the state.

Voters overwhelmingly approved the Clean Missouri initiative in 2018, but were fooled by the deceptive language of the Legislature's Dirty Missouri ballot measure in 2020.

Taken all together, Republican politicians' repeated rejections of votes by the people and their concerted efforts to undermine the right to vote and the results of the 2020 mark a dangerous new step toward authoritarian rule.

On the bright side, here in the greater Kansas City metro — where Local 249 members live — we did better than on the statewide level.

All of our key endorsed candidates, led by State Sen. Lauren Arthur and State Rep. Mark Ellebracht held their seats against fierce Republican opposition and big money contributors.

UAW-endorsed Missouri State Senate candidates Greg Razer, Barbara Anne Washington and John Rizzo also won re-election.

UAW-endorsed Missouri State House Reps Ashley Aune, Maggie Nurrenbern, Wes Rogers, Ingrid Burnett, Yolanda Young, Michael Johnson, Emily Weber, Patty Lewis, Ashley Bland Manlove, Richard Brown, Jerome Barnes, Rory Rowland, Art Schaaf, Keri Ingle, Mark Sharp and Annette Turnbaugh all won their elections.

The number of pro-worker Democrats in the Missouri House increased by one in 2020, but Republicans still hold a 23 to 8 super-majority in the Senate and a 113 to 48 super-majority in the House as well as the governor-

ship. We are one of 21 states in the nation under the complete control of the Republican Party.

Local 249 endorsed candidates in the Clay County Commissioners race for the first time. Both the UAW-endorsed candidates, Jon Carpenter, a Democrat, and Megan Thompson, a pro-labor Republican, won their races.

We got involved in these races because of citizen anger a actions taken by former commissioners LuAnn Ridgeway and Gene Owen whose actions in office were the subject of a state audit.

These local offices are important to working people in a number of ways. County Commissioners make decisions on the purchase of vehicles — and it makes a big difference whether they choose union-made vehicles. They also make decisions about paying union scale wages on public construction projects.

In addition, many local candidates will eventually run for higher office. We want to develop a good, working relationship with them at the local level so they will understand the issues important to working people when they reach higher office.

Most important, I want to offer my deep gratitude to the members of our CAP Committee led by Shirley Mata and Jay Bosler.

Every member of the CAP committee worked their butts off in the months leading up to the election. This is hard, often thankless work, that is critical to the job security, rights and working conditions of our members,

Finally, I want to wish each and every Local 249 member a safe and happy holiday season.



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.

Retiree meetings cancelled indefinitely

By Natalie Wood

It has been some time since we have been able to hold a retiree's meeting due to the safety restrictions surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. We will unfortunately be unable to hold any meetings until it is safe for us to gather, but that does not mean that we won't have some important news to share along the way.

Much has happened since we last were able to meet, we have had a presidential election, we just celebrated Thanksgiving and are now looking forward to Christmas. We have welcomed many newly retired to our ranks and have sadly had some deaths as well, some so soon after finally getting to retirement.

To the newly retired: welcome and congratulations. We hope you have a wonderful retirement and would like to extend an open invitation to join us in the future at a retiree's meeting when safety allows.

On the passing of our UAW Brothers and Sisters, please keep the families of those members in your prayers during these difficult times. Please report any deaths of our members to the Local 249 union hall by calling 816-454-6333. By doing this we can share the information in the monthly newsletter in an effort to stay informed between meetings.

Despite the year we have all endured there is still much to be thankful for. We may not be able to see one another face to face, but the bond of our brotherhood and sisterhood holds strong. It is important to stay safe by wearing your mask, washing your hands frequently and only going out when you absolutely must.

Have a wonderful and blessed Christmas. We look forward to a time when we can come together again and join in fellowship in person. Until then, reach out to those whose phone number you have or for those who are Facebook savvy help others stay connected when the world feels so isolated.

On behalf of our retiree's officers, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Stay safe everyone!

Ideas and tips to stay safe this holiday season:

- Wear a mask, wash hands frequently or use sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol and avoid touching common surfaces as well as your face, mask or glasses.
- Maintain at least six feet of distance between yourself and those outside your household.
- Host virtual get togethers with family and friends when possible. Share a meal or cook a recipe together on a video call.
- Shop online rather than in person or during peak hours when stores are crowded.
- Prepare your "signature dishes" at home for loved ones and package them to be dropped off at their front door as a nice surprise!
- Use "snail mail" (traditional postal services) and send letters or cards to



To stay safe during the COVID-19 pandemic, it's important to wear a mask outside the home.

family and loved ones.

If you choose to attend a gathering anyway, lower your risk by:

- Wearing your mask unless eating or drinking while maintaining six feet apart.
- Bring your own food, drinks,

plates, and utensils or use single-use options such as condiment packets or disposable utensils, cups, and plates.

- Avoiding commonly touched surfaces, or if you are hosting have one person wear a mask and serve food to guests.

In Memoriam

In remembrance of Local 249 retirees and active members who passed away in 2020

Dona Dennett • January 6
Paul Johnson • January 22
Jay Lewis • January 27
Larry Robertson • January 30
Judith Morris • February 4
Sidney Silvey • February 10
Travis Stockham • February 12
John Talbert • February 13
Paul Smith • February 16
Dennis Elliott • February 27
Owen Anthony • February 28
John Teague • March 10
Kim Allen • March 18
Edward Buckner • March 21
Jack Parker • March 25

Harry Shelton • March 27
Christopher Cline • March 31
Justice Knauff • March 31
Larry Cooper • April 7
Quinton Miller • April 8
Richard Jones • April 18
Donald Pearce • April 19
Freddie Garcia • April 25
Connie Eberle • May 3
James Newport • May 3
Donald Palmer • May 3
Alfred Anderson • May 24
Larry Heyser • May 27
Randy Zeikle • June 6

Danny Lundy • June 7
James Horton • June 8
David Schjoll • June 17
Charles Sinclair • June 20
Kenneth Hailey • July 2
Harold Fox • July 4
Robert Jenkins • July 19
Crisoforo Castro • July 29
Tony Zaloz • August 1
Roscoe Walker • August 3
Leo Short • August 5
Gerald Bindel • August 13
John Daniel • August 13
Ervin Banks • August 28

Ninfa Coy • August 30
Jack Saunders • September 3
Walter Small • September 4
Everett Shaw • September 10
Jerry Price • September 25
Richard Abernathy • October 7
Richard Wyatt • October 15
Sylvester Posey • November 1
William Young • November 4
Don Overbey • November 8
Jerry Sanson • November 9
Dillon Atkison • November 12
Gerald Roush • November 16
Dominic Zicarelli • November 17
Creighton Russell • November 25



Local 249 volunteers Sadie Bass, left to right, Dana Davidson, Robin Taylor, Jay Bosler, William O'Neal, Joshua Curtis, Dave Grant, Shauncei Gray, Joe Lumpkin, Kim Rowland, Greg Smith and David Winkler prepare to load 750 turkeys Nov. 20 for delivery to area social service agencies to provide dinners to those in need on Thanksgiving day. Photo by Don Lehman.

Local 249 provides 750 Thanksgiving turkeys

By Gwen Starkey

With the traditional Thanksgiving Turkey Drive gate collections out the window due to the possibility of spreading COVID-19, and Ford Motor Company deciding that this year they would not donate or match any collections, UAW Local 249 had to come up with an alternative plan to get Thanksgiving turkeys out to needy members of our community because the thought of no Thanksgiving turkey dinner was out of the question.

In a scene played out in the classic Christmas movie, A Christmas Story, when the Bumpas hounds tore through the kitchen and took off with the Thanksgiving turkey, "The heavenly aroma still hung in the house. But it was gone, all gone! No turkey! No turkey sandwiches! No turkey salad! No turkey gravy! Turkey Hash! Turkey a la King! Or gallons of turkey soup! Gone, all gone.

UAW Local 249 would have none of this. Our local and all standing committees stepped up to the plate

and donated everything needed to purchase 750 turkeys to donate to local churches and other outreach programs that feed the hungry.

"We were happy to be able to provide for our community this year," Community Services Chairperson Kim Rowland said. HyVee dropped off 187 cases of turkeys to the union hall parking lot on Nov. 20 and UAW Local 249 members commenced to loading them up for delivery to the folks that needed them. "We had many of the

same agencies that we have always worked with and a few new ones this year needing help," Rowland said. "Everyone was wanting more because there is such a great need this year. We could have doubled our donation and it still wouldn't have met the needs in our community. Our shelters and food pantries really need your donations. We are all just trying to get through this COVID and back to our normal lives."

I'm so proud to be a member of UAW Local 249," Rowland said. "We have a legacy of great leadership at Local 249 and I would like to thank all our leaders and members of all our standing committees for the excellent job they are doing."

The Community Services Committee usually has many activities planned in the months leading up to Christmas,

but COVID has put a stop to most of that. They are trying to get something going with the Women's Committee and stuff some Christmas stockings and take them to a nursing home. Unfortunately, there are zero face-to-face visits at the nursing homes at this time. They plan to adopt a family and help out with Christmas presents for the children.

"Sadly all the fun things that we usually do just aren't happening this year," Rowland said. "We just can't do any face to face charitable activities and I'm very sad about that."

The Community Services Committee members wish to thank all the membership for their unwavering support throughout the years. "We couldn't do it without you," Rowland said. "Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year to everyone."