

FIRST LOCAL NEWS

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

June 2022

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



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Local 249 Education Committee member Austin McFarland collected litter along as part of the Pleasant Valley Stream Clean project April 30. The event was sponsored the Conservation and Recreation Committee. Photo by Don Lehman.



Missouri Auditor Nicole Galloway checks out the F-150 Lightning on a visit to UAW Local 249 May 20. Galloway was in Kansas City to speak to Region 4 skilled trades.



Local 249 President Jason Starr led delegates to the Region 4 Skilled Trades Health and Safety Conference on a tour of Kansas City Assembly Plant May 20.



Local 249 members sampled Mexican cuisine at the union hall as part of the annual Cinco de Mayo celebration. Photo by Don Lehman.

First Local News

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

UAW-Ford Joint Programs

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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

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United Concordia Dental Plan 1-800-937-6432

Ford A,X,& Z Plan 1-800-348-7709

www.fordvehicleprograms.com

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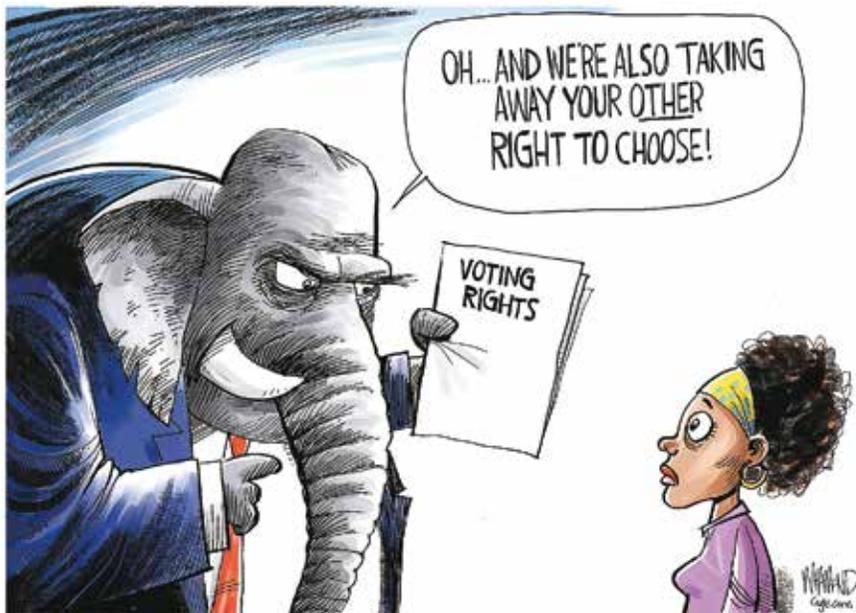
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Kansas City honors Alvin Brooks

By Naoyanna Andrews-Morris

I attended the recent 90th birthday celebration for hometown hero Alvin Brooks. It was a great charity event to continue the mission of equal justice under the law. Along with my husband, Malcolm Morris, I had the opportunity to get reacquainted with our communities difference makers.

More than 300 guests gathered May 3 at the Kansas City Museum to wish Kansas City elder statesman and social justice activist Alvin Brooks a happy 90th birthday.

The man in the spotlight couldn't be missed: Mr. Brooks was resplendent in a purple paisley tuxedo jacket, black slacks and black fedora.

"We're one city, regardless of skin color, religion or home address," he told KMBC, Channel 9. "We're all in this together. I would hope that we would understand that. We're brothers and sisters, whether we want to be or not."

U.S. Rep. Emanuel Cleaver II described him as a "bridge-builder." Bishop Mark Tolbert, president of the Kansas City Board of Police Commissioners called Brooks "a walking history book."

Those on hand to congratulate the new nonagenarian also included Jackson County Executive Frank White, former Kansas City Mayor Sly James, Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas Mayor Tyrone Garner, Kansas City Public Schools Superintendent Mark Bedell, interim Kansas City Police Chief Joseph Mabin and MCC-Penn Valley President Tyjaun Lee. Kansas City Mayor Quinton Lucas attended virtually.

Metropolitan Community College Trustee Jermaine Reed, a longtime friend and mentee of Mr. Brooks, served as master of ceremonies. "It was a joy to spend the day celebrating with so many of Mr. Brooks' friends and family, and an honor to play a role in thanking him for all he has done for our city," Reed said.

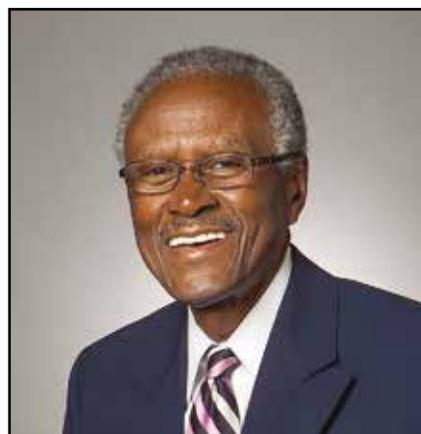
Attendees were asked to consider a donation to the Brooks Institute at Metropolitan Community College.

Their financial gifts resulted in \$20,000 for the institute, established in Alvin Brooks' name in 2000 as a forum for academic discourse around crime, violence and social justice. MCC was a presenting sponsor of the event.

A Fox 4 story noted that Brooks — one of the city's first Black police officers, its first human relations director, councilman and mayor pro tem — founded the Ad Hoc Group Against Crime at the age of 45, and 45 years later the group is still working to reduce crime in Kansas City.

A display on Alvin Brooks' life is on view through May inside the Kansas City Museum, 3218 Gladstone Boulevard.

His autobiography, "Binding Us Together," was published in February 2021 by Kansas City-based Andrews McMeel.



Kansas City civil rights leader Alvin Brooks was honored on his 90th Birthday.

Labor News From the World Wide Web

The Picket Line

UAW Volrath workers ratify contract

Over 265 members of UAW Local 1472 suspended their strike Friday and will resume shifts at Vollrath Manufacturing Services in Sheboygan, Wisconsin on Sunday's 3rd shift after ratifying a new contract.

Vollrath produces deep drawing, metal spinning, metal fabrication, annealing, polishing & finishing, refrigeration systems as a major employer for Sheboygan families.

"We appreciate every single one of our members who stood together through this strike," said Rob Kilgore, President/Bargaining Chair of UAW Local 1472.

The contract was ratified overwhelmingly by members on Friday with significant gains.

"Our members have been united and stuck together with the bargaining committee to achieve this new agreement," said Ron McInroy, director of UAW Region 4. "We appreciate the community support for our members and their families." — UAW

UAW Workers reject Case New Holland Industrial proposal, strike continues

Talks between United Auto Workers and Case New Holland Industrial were halted Thursday after a proposal from the company that included increased wages that would be largely offset by more costly health insurance.

"Neither side's talking," Nick Guernsey, president of UAW Local 807, told The Hawk Eye on Monday as the strike by about 430 unionized employees at CNHi's Burlington plant entered its fourth week. "The end of last week, we weren't gaining any traction and it just kind of got to a point where there's no sense of wasting anyone's time."

Case's proposal, Guernsey said, includes a raise of 8.5% that averages out to 6% over three years. But he said the insurance package outlined in the proposal would require higher employee contributions, along with higher deductibles.

"Even if my members took raises right now, we'd lose money on the insurance side because it's definitely inadequate and subpar to what we have now," he said.

Guernsey said that between the proposal's wage increase and rise in insurance costs, a first-year assembler would make \$30 per week more than what they do now.

"The raise wouldn't even put a full tank of gas in my truck," he said. — *The Hawkeye*

UAW official warns 'we can't assume' electric vehicles will bring good jobs

The auto industry is barreling toward electrification. That can be an exciting opportunity or a threat to working people, United Auto Workers Vice President Cindy Estrada said Tuesday.

"We can't assume these are going to be good jobs," Estrada warned during a panel hosted by the left-leaning Center for American Progress. "Because we can assume that corporate America is going to use these subsidies to do union avoidance."

She argued that federal funds aimed at accelerating EV production must be tied to incentives for those facilities to unionize in order to protect high wages and benefits.

Her comments came a day after Sen. Joe Manchin, the centrist West Virginia Democrat who blocked President Joe Biden's climate and social policy bill late last year, indicated at the World Economic Forum in Davos that he's optimistic he could still reach a deal with leadership on a party-line energy and climate bill that may include manufacturing incentives.

They also come as money continues to pour out to clean transportation projects from the bipartisan infrastructure law passed last year, including an initial \$500 million for zero-emission school buses and \$615 million for EV chargers. — *The Detroit News*



Local 249 volunteers led by the union's Conservation and Recreation Committee celebrated Earth Day April 30 by rolling up their sleeves and getting to work with the Pleasant Valley Stream Clean effort. Earth Day, now an International event, has been celebrated since April 22, 1970, but its origins are here in the United States. In fact, this annual celebration wouldn't exist without legendary UAW leader Walter Reuther. Photo by Don Lehman.

Local 249 volunteers celebrate Earth Day

By Cecelia Davis

In celebration of Earth Day, Local 249's Conservation and Recreation Committee thought it was a perfect opportunity to join in on making our environment a better place. On April 30th, Robin Bindel, the chairwoman for the Parks and Recreation committee, got her fellow members to volunteer some of their time out in Pleasant Valley. Other members on the other committees heard about the fantastic news and immediately joined in on the action.

The weather couldn't be any better as the members congregated in front of the Pleasant Valley Public Works building while they waited eagerly to accept their assignments and their exact location on where they will start their clean-up projects. The volunteers got a T-shirt with a Missouri stream team label on the back, trash pickers, sturdy bags and gardening gloves to make the clean up a breeze.

"This trip was fulfilling!" said Tylor Riley who is currently on the education committee. He had the privilege to help clean up the Shoal Creek. "Just seeing the amount of trash that people threw out and that it has made its way

into this small stretch of creek has made me more self-conscious about throwing stuff out and making sure it goes in a trash bin."

As stated in the City of Pleasant Valley directory, the public works department is responsible for guiding desirable community development and maintenance through its various divisions. Some of these divisions include the building and zoning department, storm water department, street department, sewer department, and trash, recycling, and yard waste.

The clean-up project was such a great turn out that the city of Pleasant Valley Mayor, David Slater, stopped by

to visit with many of our members. He even made it known that for his city, "they drive Ford units!" He was such a proud supporter. Also, state representative, Mark Ellebracht, traded his business suit in for the day and got down and dirty to help clean up within the bushes of the stream with our members.

Conservation is for everyone, young or old. Brittney Sedillo, part of the recreation and conservation committee, had brought her 5-year-old son along to help educate him of the importance of keeping our planet clean. "I always feel amazing helping in the community or with others in general. I've always been a giver to people in need and it's my goal to teach my son the will of helping others!"

Before the day was over our impressive UAW volunteers did not leave empty handed. The Pleasant Valley Public Works left them with small gifts that consisted of head bandanas, cups, whistles, and stickers to remember this day, where they helped create a

cleaner environment. "The worst part was when they called it a day for us. There was still so much trash left," said Tylor Riley. Cleaning up the planet doesn't have to be only for Earth Day. You can help do your part by picking up trash around your neighborhood or if this article interests you, you can contact the hall and ask about the Conservation and Recreation Committee.

The committee provides a variety of opportunities that fall into two categories: recreation, which includes leisure time activities, and conservation, which includes environmental concerns.

It has been proven that in today's busy work environments, people need to combat stress with quality family and individual leisure activities. If you enjoy organizing events such as bowling leagues, hunting trips, sporting events, team sport competitions and the like, then the Conservation and Recreation Committee could be your committee of choice.



Local 249 Education Committee members Chris Allinder, left to right, Kelsey Pinzino, Gary Thomas and Austin McFarland took time to visit the eternal flame at the grave site of Walter Reuther while attending a Region 4 Education Conference at Black Lake April 24-29. Photo by James Jewel.

Building union solidarity through education

By Gary Thomas and Austin McFarland

Starting April 25th, our international union hosted an education committee conference at the Walter and May Reuther Education Center, also known as Black Lake. UAW International education representatives from every region taught a myriad of classes from building standing committees to growing membership power through a strong and robust member to member program. Local union discussion leaders from each region skillfully navigated the curriculum. Discussion leaders are workers from different unions across the nation who take on extensive training to help guide the next generation of UAW members.

Nestled on a thousand acres of Black Lake the Walter and May Reuther Education Center has a Library, which is stocked with books about anything from how to file grievances to a guide to FMLA. It is an encyclopedic library of union knowledge.

Over the course of the week Education Committee Vice-Chair Kelsey Pinzino, Education committee members Chris Allinder and Austin McFarland and myself took every class we were offered, never turning down an opportunity to learn more for about our great local, organization and its history.

Bought in 1967, The Walter and May Reuther education center was designed to be a haven for UAW members to relax, learn, share and practice knowledge with each other. Finished in 1970, just months after the tragic death

of Walter and May Reuther, Black Lake has hosted millions of UAW members seeking its designed purpose.

"The Education committee conference showed me just how lucky I'm to be from such an active local who has very knowledge leadership who seek to empower our members. Every day I heard stories of brothers and sisters who were the only members on their respective committees. I have learned and grown so much since joining the education committee and this conference has shown me that I have so much more room to grow. I'm truly thankful for this opportunity and to the knowledge our educational Representatives and discussion leaders passed to me," said Education Committee member Chris Allinder.

Few of us at the conference knew each other, yet we were already family

upon arrival. And not just any family either. We resembled a picture perfect, storybook fairy tale, Brady Bunch type of family. As though we'd all watched each other grow up together, to overcome both shared and unique obstacles, and become the best possible version of ourselves.

We weren't just delegates from our locals sent to attend an Effective Educator Training Conference. We were emissaries of the working class. Congregating for the sole purpose of learning from each other's strengths and overcoming our weaknesses together. So that we can share our collective power with those who are less able, unable, and even those who may be unwilling for whatever reason, to stand up for themselves and for their brothers and sisters in fighting the good fight.

Being one of the largest locals there, UAW 249 members heard first-hand the struggles much smaller locals had with the ever-increasing exploitation of management. Many times, our members shook their heads in disbelief as stories of supervisors, who seem to relish the pain they inflicted, echoed in our ears. It was a reality check to our entitlement and a reminder how well our leadership has fought for us over

the course of the pandemic.

We win so often that minor inconveniences seem like a major loss. In equal fashion, small locals around the nation heard our stories of success, contract wins, and were reinvigorated to fight for themselves harder, knowing that a better world is possible.

"Although we all know that solidarity is not a feeling, but an action, with all of our numerous locals gathered in one place for the same reason, it was agreed & went without question that solidarity was in the air itself," said Austin McFarland.

The end of the conference was marked by a question-and-answer session by IUAW President Ray Curry. Members from locals large and small had the opportunity to ask questions directly to the president.

"From start to finish the conference was full of information and empowerment," said Local 249 Education Committee Vice Chair Kelsey Pinzino. "Since we have joined Region 4, I have never felt more educated in my time in the UAW. Being taught how to foster an effective learning environment. We were cross trained creating presentations and helping each person to participate in their own learning process."



UAW President Ray Curry, left, presented House Speaker Nancy Pelosi with the Walter P. Reuther Distinguished Service Award at the National UAW CAP Conference in National Harbor, Maryland May 18. Photo by John Davis.

UAW CAP Conference advocates for workers

By Pat Hayes

UAW delegates from across the nation met in National Harbor, Maryland, near the nation's Capitol, May 14-18 to advocate for working families at the National CAP Conference.

The Citizenship and Legislative Committee, most often referred to as the Community Action Program (CAP), is the worksite political-legislative arm of the local union and the vital workplace political activator.

CAP members work at the local, state and national levels to protect worker rights, promote fair trade, advocate for new initiatives for working families, promote health and safety and demand action around other issues that affect working families.

"Our Community Action Program is at the heart of our legislative advocacy and the work delegates will do this week will further the cause of membership. Our union is strong because of the work CAP activists and leaders put in representing our interests in cities, statehouses, as well as in

Washington, D.C., said UAW President Ray Curry in welcoming delegates to the conference.

During the plenary sessions at the conference, delegates discussed and debated a number of critical issues that affect working people. Chief among them, with union membership reduced to levels not seen since the Great Depression of the 1930s, is the right to form and join unions.

"The right of workers to come together and collectively bargain with their employer is an internationally recognized human right. It is also protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and enshrined in U.S. law by the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) over eight decades ago," declared delegates in one of the first issues statements adopted at the conference.

With voting rights under attack in many states across the nation, delegates reaffirmed that, "Our work to promote civil rights goes well beyond advocating for labor rights. Our union has a proud history of fighting for the advancement of civil and voting rights. We were early supporters of the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Freedom Rides. We were a critical partner in the fight for civil rights, with U A W President Walter Reuther joining forces with The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to fight racial injustice. We recognized the strong connection between the rights of workers and immigrants when we gave support to Cesar Chavez and the farm workers' struggle. Today, we continue to support policies that protect voting rights, increase voter participation and advance civil rights for marginalized groups."

Noting that living standards for the middle and working classes have been slipping for decades, delegates demanded, "a manufacturing strategy that creates good jobs and strengthens

our communities. We can accomplish this through trade policies that raise wages for workers and prevent multinational companies from outsourcing U.S. jobs; fair and equitable tax policies that do not benefit only the super wealthy and corporations; and investments in worker training and education to ensure there is a robust pipeline of skilled workers in the U.S. manufacturing sector.

Conference delegates also note that the COVID-19 pandemic exposed persistent flaws in the U.S. healthcare system and reinforced the need for more affordable, accessible health care.

Resolving to take action on affordable health care, delegates laid out an action plan to urge senators to support the Lower Drug Costs Now Act (H.R. 3), legislation that would significantly lower the cost of prescription drugs by prohibiting drug price gouging by allowing the government to negotiate drug prices and penalize drug companies who raise drug prices above the rate of inflation.



Local 249 President Jason Starr, center, led delegates to the Region 4 Skilled Trades Health and Safety Conference on a tour of the Kansas City Assembly Plant May 20.

Local 249 hosts skilled trades conference

By Pat Hayes

Skilled tradespeople who work in the auto, agricultural implements and aerospace industries met at Local 249 May 18-20 for the Region 4 Skilled Trades Health and Safety Conference. This was the first Region 4 skilled trades conference to be held since the COVID-19 pandemic prevented many in-person meetings and the first to be hosted by Local 249.

The purpose of the conference is to assist skilled tradespeople in the region with organizing, improvement of working conditions, increase of wages and increased standardization of contracts and apprenticeship programs. Also, to bring about a better understanding of the common problems and concerns of skilled trades persons across Region 4 by an exchange of views and information.

In welcoming delegates to Kansas City, Local 249 President Jason Starr and Skilled Trades Bargaining Committee member Scott Pyle led the group on tours of the Transit, and Truck systems and Stamping Plant at the Kansas City Assembly Plant.

Participants got to see E-Transit all electric van batteries being assembled

on the line as part of the tour.

Starr opened the plenary sessions of the conference by introducing Missouri Auditor Nicole Galloway saying that workers in Missouri are under attack. For decades, Republicans who hold super majorities in both the House and Senate have introduced and passed antilabor legislation in each session of the legislature.

Galloway, the highest ranking Democratic elected official in the state, gave an opening address to the delegates detailed the most recent attacks on worker rights in the state.

"Republicans in the state are bulldozing over the will of the voters," said Galloway, "by making it nearly impossible to file and vote on initiative

petitions like the one that overturned right to work in our state."

Galloway also noted that as state auditor, one of her duties is enforcement of prevailing wage laws for construction workers on public projects. Missouri's Prevailing Wage Law establishes a minimum wage rate for public works projects in Missouri valued over \$75,000. Examples of public works projects include bridges, roads and government buildings. The Prevailing Wage Law applies to all public works projects constructed by or on behalf of state and local public bodies.

Republicans in the state legislature have repeatedly tried to weaken and eliminate prevailing wage laws in the two decades they've held majorities in the House and Senate.

In breakout sessions, skilled trades people in the agricultural implements sector held a John Deere-Caterpillar Subcouncil meeting.

Other breakout sessions discussed procedures to issue journeymen cards

and bylaws and resolutions.

Reports were delivered by Tinna Wooten, of the UAW International Skilled Trades Department, Anthony Rainey, Region 4 Servicing Rep. for Civil & Human Rights and Skilled Trades and John Stanfill, chairman of the UAW International Skilled Trades Advisory Council.

Kansas City based UAW servicing Rep. Dan Kandlebinder also gave a report to delegates about the importance of the union's VCAP program.

Region 4 includes the states: of Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. In addition to the Ford F-150 and Transit commercial van built at KCAP, members make Caterpillar tractors and diesel engines in Peoria, the Ford Taurus in the Chicago, and truck bodies and access equipment for Oshkosh Truck Corporation. Region 4 also represents, John Deere workers and, Stellantis workers in Belvidere, Illinois.



UAW Retion 4 Veterans Committee members met May 19 at the Pat Greathouse Center in Ottawa, Illinois to hear wounded Iraq and Afghanistan war veteran Todd Nicely speak. Local 249 delegates Dave Grant, Hans Beebe, Demetris Camp, Regina Anderson, Tracie Chrisman, Nathan Chrisman and our Retiree Veteran Anita Meyers-Pickens attended.

Region 4 vets honor a true American hero

By Dave Grant

On May 19th Local 249 Veterans Committee converged on Region 4 in Ottawa Illinois for the Spring Veterans conference. The night before, UAW Vets from Illinois-Minnesota- Wisconsin - Missouri- and Kansas broke bread along with adult beverages at the VFW post 2470 hosted by the post commander. Region 4 provided a shuttle so our Vets could go to and from the VFW safely.

Local 249 had six delegates at the conference, Dave Grant, Hans Beebe, Demetris Camp, Regina Anderson, Tracie Chrisman, Nathan Chrisman and our Retiree Veteran Anita Meyers-Pickens.

We learned that the Rand D beside your name doesn't matter much when it comes to Veterans Legislation. We as Vets must pay attention to all legislation when it comes to Veterans.

We were also blessed to have our guest Speaker Todd Nicely at our conference.

Todd Nicely, an Arnold, Missouri

native, served two tours in combat, one in Iraq and the other in Afghanistan.

While returning from a routine "security patrol" in the Taliban infested area of Afghanistan where his battalion found themselves stationed, the squad was preparing to cross a bridge. Like the good Marine leader he is, Corporal Nicely, was "leading from the front not just figuratively, but literally, he was walking point.

As he began to cross the bridge, he stepped on a pressure plate mine. The massive blast from the explosives blew him into the air. Nicely does not recall

hearing any sound but does recall hitting the ground after the explosion. His first thought was "Aw God, what happened?"

As the realization for the enormous blast that he just endured and the massive injuries he suffered began to sink in, he had two thoughts. One was "just keep breathing so you can get back to your wife."

The second, after letting out a few blood-curdling screams, was that he became concerned about the effect that his screaming might have on the Marines in his squad and according to Todd he decided to just "shut up" and "stay strong."

Think about that and let it sink in for a minute. He had just endured an incredible explosive blast, suffered massive injuries and his two thoughts were about getting back to his wife and not frightening the Marines that

he was responsible for by his screams. If that is not a hero, the word has no meaning.

Nicely immediately realized that he has been blown up "pretty good" but he certainly did not realize that the blast had blown off all four of his limbs. In that fateful day in March 2010, Corporal Nicely, United States Marine Corps, became one of only two modern day Veterans that have endured battlefield injuries resulting in the loss of all four limbs and survived.

But when you meet this incredible young Man, you will quickly understand why he could survive such an incredible challenge. He has an indomitable spirit, infectious enthusiasm, a positive outlook and strength of mind and character that is second to none. Corporal Nicely USMC is a true Warrior, and a true American Hero.

KCAP to add third shift in Transit, 1,100 jobs

By Jim Fisher

On June 2, the UAW and Ford Motor Company made the official announcement that Local 249 and the Kansas City Assembly plant would be adding and additional 1,100 jobs to the plant with the addition of a third shift for the Transit System. This announcement will also lead to over 500 temporary members converting from Temporary Status to Full Time In-Progression Status. The estimated additional investments coming to KCAP are more than 95 million dollars.

This announcement was driven by the proven hard work of UAW Local 249 members. Over the past three years our members have faced every possible challenge ever seen in the auto industry. Global pandemic, world parts shortages, mandates requiring masks during extreme heat, and unpredictable schedules have been hurdles that our members have had to overcome.

Through it all, our members showed up to work and produced the best built F-150's and Transit vans. None of this was easy, and at times seemed impossible but our members delivered. When the decisions were made on where to invest additional jobs, your reputation made the decision easy for Ford.

All of our members should take pride in what you have accomplished. This announcement would not have happened if not for you. Thanks to Local 249 members hard work our plant will add additional shifts, more full time members, and a solid future for KCAP.

More than that. You impacted people's lives. New members will see

job security. Families will benefit by improved health care plans, and a stronger community.

Local 249 members have made Pleasant Valley, Claycomo, Liberty, and Kansas City better communities. Local governments including Clay County all the way up to the State of Missouri have become better because of the work you do. Every member should take just a minute to recognize the size and impact of this announcement.

While all of this is very good news, over the next several months there will be several large topics that will need to be addressed. We will continue discussions on future hiring to fill the 1,100 new jobs, additional facility upgrades, and contract proposals for the 2023 agreements — both Nationally and Locally — that are set to expire in September of 2023. The next several months will be very busy for Local 249 and our members.

We are asking all members for support in continuing to do their part in improving the quality of both our systems. Continue to be on the lookout for any known defects. If any are found,



Local 249 Bargaining Chair Jim Fisher reported on the exciting developments for KCAP at the May membership meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

make sure you're using the Quality Stop Button Procedure to report any quality issues.

Now, more than ever, our customers are depending on us to safeguard their vehicle. This plant has had a long standing tradition of the best quality in the industry. While scheduling and supplier issues have made this challenging for everyone in the auto industry, we must set the bar even

higher than ever. Don't Ship It, Don't Accept It, and Don't Pass it On.

We must again get back to the mindset of taking pride in our work. There is hope that later this year the supply chains for Ford will improve. As we create additional jobs and bring new members into the plant, we need to show them that quality work is the key to securing their future here for years to come.

Local 249 retirees say: "What a good day we had"

By Natalie Wood

Welcome all to our first retiree meeting in over two years. We were so pleased to see so many of our retirees show up. We appreciate each and every one of you.

We tried to meet in the atrium because our elevator was not working, to accommodate those who needed assistance. But the number of people who showed up helped us to see, we needed to move the meeting to our regular meeting place. So, we made that move so that all could be seated.

We got a lot of information from our union leaders. There was information on insurance, phasing out of ETHA and co-pay changes. The question-and-answer time was very good. We even got a report on fixing the elevator.

Our meeting gave us information from Blue Cross/Blue shield on benefits and encouraged use to take advantage of the 150.00 worth of medical

supplies that you and your spouse are each entitled too. We had raffle give away and some newly retired members showed up.

Lloyd and Beverly Brown traveled from Colorado to attend. Since retiring they have settled in Colorado and upon learning of our meeting decided to come by on their way to other places. It was good to see everyone and we look forward to seeing all at our next meeting scheduled for June 15, at 10:00 am.

Please remember to keep your union informed with your current address and phone number. To reach as many retirees as possible, we call to invite retirees to our meetings. In do-



Local 249 retirees are meeting again after a long COVID pause. Photo by Don Lehman.

ing that, we found a large percentage of the phone numbers were invalid. If we need to let you know of changes to meeting dates. We will call to let you know. Some of you come from a great distance and we would hate that we couldn't reach you and you drove all the way here.

Our box lunches served us well and we will serve box lunches at our June meeting as well.

As good as it is to see each of you that attended this May meeting, let us keep the families of the ones that have gone on in our thoughts and prayers. The 2022 deaths are: Thomas Aikmus, Robert Alexander, Harold Barton, Georgia Brown, John Brown, Kenneth Cook, Micheal Cox, Alyce Hutchison, Joseph Jones, Edward Kashary, Willie McClure, Jason Morley, Clayton Riley, Dely Winfrey.

Let's not make perfect the enemy of good

By Jason Starr

Recently, Ed Scaggs, my friend and brother from our executive board sent me a motivational video titled "Good" by Jocko Willink that really hit home. The premise of the video is that when major problems arise, the issues popping up seem overwhelming and insurmountable and everything is going wrong, you just need to say "good." There is ultimately going to be something good to be found in all the bad, an opportunity to rise above, make changes and come out stronger on the other side. This video from Ed was a well-timed reminder for me in my personal life but of equal importance as a UAW member and President of Local 249.

When it comes to our organization, of course there are going to be frustrations and serious issues that we must work to address in our contracts and complex issues that we all face every day on the plant floor. It seems like each day brings new challenges, new issues to tackle and new problems to solve and it is easy to get overwhelmed by them. However, that is exactly what we do at Local 249! Despite our differences and frustrations, we come together and make our collective voices heard loud and clear. We stand side by side in battle after battle as we go to war to enforce the terms of our collective bargaining agreements that the company is far too willing to violate.

It is easy to get mired down in the mud of the trenches and forget what we are fighting for and sometimes even lose sight of who is standing next to you. It is only in the brief pauses after a victory that we stand in the light and look around and see that it took all of us, shoulder to shoulder to make it through. The victories do not come swiftly or easily, but they do indeed come. It is well known that when UAW Local 249 is in a fight, we are willing to take all the steps necessary to protect each other, our products, and our future.

The battles we must engage in are not just with the company. The attacks come at us in every aspect of our lives, socially, politically, and economically.

We are attacked in the halls of legislature by anti-worker lawmakers that pursue the interests of their corporate campaign donors while ignoring working people and our communities. We are vilified by our non-union auto competitors in the "right to work" south for having the audacity to demand dignity and justice on the job through good wages and benefits. We are subjected to scrutiny in the media when we gain anything as UAW members and ignored by the same media outlets when we do so much good work in our communities.

Our membership works tirelessly in a very difficult environment to build the best built F-150 and Transit Van. We take so much pride in the work that we do, and I proudly argue to all that would dare challenge that we do it better than any other workforce in the world.

That is why it is so important to step back and see the good that takes place beyond the frustration and the day to day struggles we face. Our Union was built to bring dignity and justice to the workplace, to lift workers like us and our families out of poverty and into prosperity. To give workers a voice not only in the workplace but at every level of our society. The UAW was designed to level the battlefield in our continued fight for social and economic justice and continues to do so today.

Our Union changes lives and we see it every day and we hear it in the



Local 249 President Jason Starr reported on union priorities at the May membership meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

conversations we have together in the plant. Whether it is protecting contractual rights through the hundreds of grievances handled by our committees and Bargaining Committee each month. Or how we rally around a fellow member in a difficult time to raise funds to help them through a crisis or tragic situation. We see our negotiated medical benefits provide access to life saving treatments and medical care that also protect us from financial burden due to unforeseen illness or accidents, members entering the skilled trades apprenticeship program, our members buying homes and new cars, taking family vacations, retiring with dignity. There is so much more provided in our collective bargaining agreements and through the relationships we forge as UAW members.

Some will argue, "that's all great, but we have lots of problems and serious issues we still need to fix." That is one of the great things about being a member of the UAW. We have the ability and opportunity to define our own solutions to those issues. Even within our shortcomings we can see how our

Union creates the opportunity to make differences and change lives.

One example of this is the "leap-frog" pay issue that has been corrected and the converting of temporary members ahead of schedule. When this was fixed, you could see and feel the effects on their lives and what it means to their families now.

We cannot allow ourselves to become so frustrated that we forget how fortunate we are to have the rights we have and the power to engage in the fight.

Our Union has been through so much, we have so much work to do to ensure that it is there for generations to come. So that those generations can reap the rewards and take pride in belonging to the UAW, a Union that has provided the foundation upon which we have all worked so hard to build our lives.

And since I couldn't say it any better myself, I wanted to share the conclusion of the Jocko Willink "Good" Video that Ed sent me!

"When things are going bad: Don't get all bummed out, don't get startled, don't get frustrated. No. Just look at the issue and say: "Good."

Accept reality and focus on the solution. Take that issue, take that setback, take that problem, and turn it into something good. Go forward. And, if you are part of a team, that attitude will spread throughout.

Finally: if you can say the word "good," then guess what?

It means you're still alive.

It means you're still breathing.

if you're still breathing, that means you've still got some fight left in you.

So, get up, dust off, reload, recalibrate, re-engage – and go out on the attack."

Let's get after it

ATTENTION LOCAL 249 RETIREES

In order to ensure appropriate coverage for you and your family in the event of a marital status change, it is important to contact each of the respective benefits centers listed below. Such changes could affect the amount of your pension benefit so it is best to notify as soon as possible when you experience a change.

If you get married, divorced or your spouse passes away, contact:

- Ford-UAW Retirement Board 1-800-829-8833
- Retiree Health Care Connect 1-866-637-7555
- National Employee Service Center 1-800-248-4444
- TESPHE myfordbenefits.com
- MetLife 1-833-552-3673

Republican majorities can't get anything done

By State Rep. Mark Sharp

This was a record setting year for the smallest number of bills passed by the Missouri General Assembly and sent to the governor for his signature to become law.

Only 60 bills were passed, and 19 of these were "must pass" appropriations bills. Two proposed constitutional amendments also were passed that will be submitted to Missouri voters for approval.

Fortunately, some very bad legislative proposals were among the measures that didn't pass this year, but many urgently needed good measures died as well. Below are lists of some of the most noteworthy measures by subject, both good and bad, and their fates.

BAD LEGISLATION THAT DIDN'T PASS

• **"SELF DEFENSE":** Sought to create a legal presumption that a person who uses physical or deadly force against another person was acting in self-defense. Widely opposed by law enforcement organizations, one prosecutor described this legislation as legalized murder.

• **UNEMPLOYMENT:** Sought to cut the maximum number of weeks of unemployment benefits in Missouri from the current 20 weeks to as low as eight weeks depending on the rate of unemployment.

• **DEFUNDING MEDICAID EXPANSION:** Sought to put a proposed constitutional amendment on the ballot that would have allowed the legislature not to fund the expansion of Medicaid eligibility to cover more uninsured persons that Missouri voters passed in 2020.

• **CENSORING HISTORY:** Sought to restrict how public schools teach students about slavery and racism with some measures banning certain books and authors, making it impossible to accurately teach the full scope of American history and to fully understand the origins of many current societal problems.

• **INITIATIVE PETITIONS:** Sought to make it extremely difficult for citizens to continue to use the initiative petition process to bypass the legislature and propose new laws or constitutional amendments which are then placed on the ballot for approval. This is how Medicaid expansion was enacted.

• **TRANSGENDER ATHLETES:** Sought to prohibit transgender girls from participating in high school girls' athletics.

GOOD LEGISLATION THAT SHOULD HAVE PASSED

• **BLAIR'S LAW:** Sought to make

discharging a firearm with criminal negligence within or into city limits - such as engaging in celebratory or indiscriminate gunfire - a serious state offense. It is named after 11-year-old Blair Shanahan Lane who was killed by celebratory gunfire.

• **MISSOURI NONDISCRIMINATION ACT:** Sought to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in employment, housing, banking or public accommodations.

• **POSTPARTUM CARE:** Sought to lengthen the term of coverage for postpartum care under Missouri's Medicaid program from 60 days to one year.

• **RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA:** Sought to legalize recreational marijuana use for those age 21 and older and expunge past convictions for marijuana related crimes.

BAD LEGISLATION THAT PASSED

• **VOTER PHOTO ID (HB 1878):** Establishes a photo voter ID requirement. The Missouri Supreme Court has struck down previous photo voter ID requirements for placing an unconstitutional restriction on the right to vote. A lawsuit challenging this latest photo ID requirement is expected.

GOOD LEGISLATION THAT PASSED

• **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (SB 672):** Strengthens the Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant program for worker training and apprenticeships and establishes Targeted Industrial Manufacturing Enhancement Zones to allow contiguous or overlapping political subdivisions to fund joint infrastructure improvements to promote economic development.

• **MEDICAID FUNDING (Appropriation):** Fully funded Missouri's Medicaid program, including the voter approved eligibility expansion, for the remainder of fiscal year 2022 which ends June 30 and all of fiscal year 2023.

• **TEACHER PAY (Appropriation):** Provides state matching funds to cover 70% of the cost of raising the minimum salaries for public school teachers to \$38,000 a year.

• **STUDENT TRANSPORTATION (Appropriation):** Fully funded the state's share of local public school districts' student transportation costs for the first time since 1991.

• **URBAN FARMS TAX CREDIT:** Allows a taxpayer to claim a tax credit for half of their eligible expenses for es-



Representative Mark A. Sharp, a Democrat, represents Jackson County, District 36, in the Missouri House of Representatives.

tablishing or improving an urban farm including a community garden not to exceed \$5,000 for each urban farm.

• **PRISON NURSERIES:** Establishes a Correctional Center Nursing Program requiring the Department of Corrections to establish nurseries in one or more of its correctional centers for women by July 1, 2025, to allow women inmates who give birth while in custody to keep their children with them for up to 18 months.

• **WORLD CUP TAX EXEMPTION:** Exempts tickets from sales tax if Kansas City is selected to host the 2026 FIFA World Cup soccer tournament.

• **NEW STATE RECOGNITIONS:** Establishes new state recognitions, including becoming the seventh state to officially recognize February as "Black History Month" and the first state to recognize November as "Native American Heritage Month".

While not many bills passed, the good bills that passed clearly outweighed the bad.

If the governor vetoes any bills or any specific appropriations, the General Assembly will have an opportunity to override those vetoes with a two-thirds vote during the annual veto session in September.

Obstructionist senators block debate

By State Sen. Lauren Arthur

Every ten years, following the federal census, congressional and legislative districts need to be redrawn to reflect changes in population to ensure equal representation. Normally, this process occurs more than a year before the next election. However, due to COVID-19, census data was delayed in being collected, processed, and distributed to the states by a year.

Obstructionist senators blocked meaningful debate on most bills for months, lobbying for a gerrymandered map. Senate leadership invoked a rarely-used rule to force the bill to the floor for discussion during the last week. After senators approved the bill with a 22-11 vote, the Senate adjourned a day early. While the map does not reflect Missouri's electorate, it protects Kansas City's congressional seat.

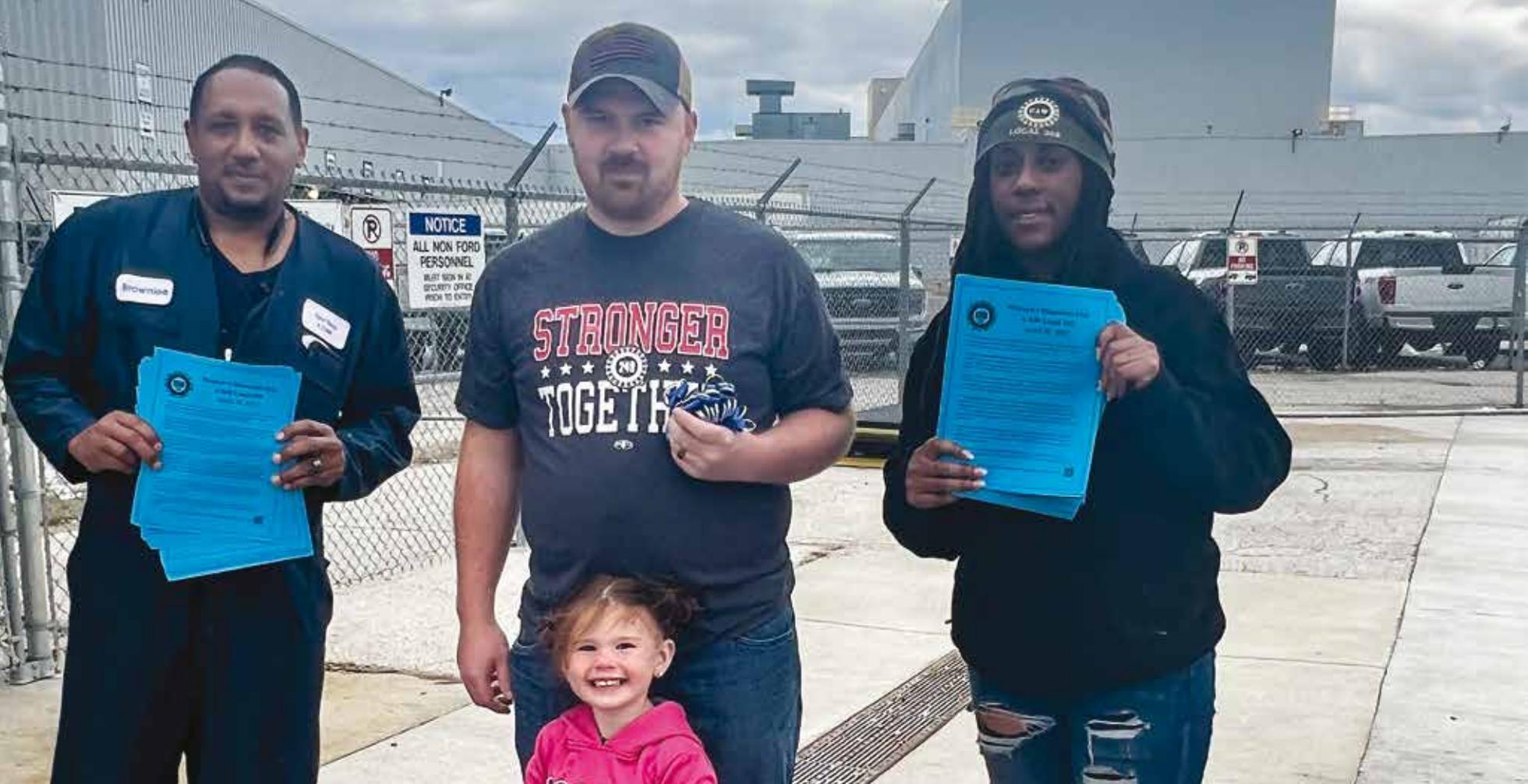
Following the 2020 election, a wave of bills claiming to ensure "election integrity" — while disenfranchising many Americans — have been filed in statehouses across the country. The

GOP supermajority passed its version with House Bill (HB) 1878. This bill imposes a photo ID requirement. It also allows for in-person, no-excuse absentee voting during the two weeks before an election.

In recent years, voters' priorities and political goals of the GOP legislature have collided (think: Right-to-Work legislation, Medicaid expansion, and the minimum wage).

Rather than listen to their constituents, GOP lawmakers want to limit the initiative petition process.

This legislation died in the final week following a filibuster by Democrats.



Local 249 Member to Member Committee members Drecus Brownlee, left to right, Zach Pridgen and Naoyanna Andrews got some help distributing flyers commemorating Workers Memorial Day at the main plant gate April 28. Photo by Erica Eckart.

Local 249 observes Workers Memorial Day

By Erica Eckart

Workers Memorial Day, also known as International Workers Memorial Day, takes place annually around the world on April 28th.

This year the Member to Member Committee took to the gates with an informational leaflet and a keychain to help our local honor those that we have lost to work related deaths.

Every year more people are killed at work than they are at war. Most of these individuals die because of a preventable workplace incident or mainly because most employer mindsets are geared towards profits and quantities instead of safety and quality.

Most recently we were all faced with a pandemic that reached devastating death tolls that resulted in us losing a few of our own brothers and sisters on the line.

Covid 19 was critical in bringing to the forefront just how easy it was for big companies like Ford to choose profits over the health and safety of their workers. We've witnessed the companies overwhelming willingness to neglect their own pandemic safety protocols to keep the place running. We've had several deaths as a result of company greed and have had our eyes opened to the reality that we are just

a number to them and nothing more.

We are fortunate to be a part of a union and therefore we have a voice in the workplace as well as people that are willing to fight for our safety. To us we are not just a number, we are friends, we are family, we matter to someone.

According to a 2019 data report collected by the occupational health and safety administration (OSHA) out of 37,000 workplace safety hazard inspections, 2,800 of them were at union job sites. That is a significantly lower safety hazard report rate than a non-union shop, but our work isn't done.

Could you imagine a place of employment where you couldn't call your committeeman to come protect you from the unsafe injustices of negligent health and safety hazards in your workplace?

Could you imagine not having a fellow coworker ready to stop the line when a sewer pipe bursts overhead and is pouring hazardous waste all over your workstation?

Together, we are raising our collec-

tive voices to win stronger health and safety protections in the workplace and stronger job safety and health laws. Together we have the individual right and duty to fight for the health and safety for ourselves and our coworkers.

Sure, a paycheck is important when it comes to supporting your family, but the most important way we can support our families is having the ability to return home to them safely.

Brothers and Sisters, as we take the time to reflect on friends and loved ones whose lives were lost too soon, we must pick up the pieces and fight so that we may prevent this from happening to someone else. No matter the circumstances we have always and will always be stronger together.

"April 28th, Workers Memorial Day, is a day of remembrance honoring all those who lost their lives, were seriously injured, or were sickened by their work," said UAW President Ray Curry in a message to members. "But it is also a day to recommit ourselves to the promise that every worker has a fundamental right to a safe job. Fulfilling this promise requires that we recommit to the fight for a workplace free of hazards."

Curry noted that, "April 28, 2022, marks 52 years since Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 into law. The OSH Act was passed because of the relentless efforts of the labor movement. When OSHA was formed fifty years ago, the daily toll was 38 workers killed on the job. Enforcement of OSHA regulations, as well as the hard-fought victories by labor unions and our allies, have reduced the number of workplace fatalities to less than 14 per day, a 62% reduction. Unfortunately, many rules are still 50 years old, out of date and too lax for the 5,000 workers who die on the job each year. An additional 50,000 workers die prematurely each year from occupational diseases that could be prevented by reducing exposures to the myriad of hazards unaddressed by OSHA rules."

"OSHA's rules and activities cannot replace strong union advocacy and the protections we gain from collective bargaining. Through negotiations, the UAW achieves health and safety provisions that bolster OSHA rules but also go far beyond those basic regulations to reduce ergonomic hazards, workplace violence, chemical exposures, noise, and unsafe equipment," Curry added.