

FIRST LOCAL NEWS

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July 2022



Memorial honors
“those known only
to God” | p 8

UAW raises strike
pay to \$400 a week

| p 9

By the people, for
the people perishing
in Missouri | p 11

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Local 249 member Sydne Donaldson volunteered with members of the union's Community Service Committee June 15 to renovate a Habitat for Humanity home. Habitat for Humanity is a global nonprofit housing organization working in local communities with families in need of decent and affordable housing. Habitat homeowners help build their own homes alongside volunteers and pay an affordable mortgage.



On Memorial Day, members of Local 249 Veterans Committee placed wreaths at six different area locations: the Richmond Court house, Anita Gorman Park, Higginsville Veterans Cemetery, the Black Veterans Memorial and the Vietnam and Korean War memorials.



It was a father and son sweep on Truman Lake June 5 for the Local 249 Bass Tournament. First Place and Big Bass were won by Dave and Dylan Ferguson. Second Place went to Greg and Phil Proffitt.



Kenny and Luke Bailey took First Place and Big Crappie at the 13th Annual Kendal Bailey Memorial Tournament sponsored by the Local 249 Conservation and Recreation Committee on Truman Lake June 19. Leon and Noah Carlton placed second.

First Local News

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Retiree Representative John Lowe

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

UAW-Ford Joint Programs

Apprentice Training

Cortez Bradley 816-459-2060

Benefits

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

Employee Involvement

Chad Troncin 816-459-1372

Darroyce Thornton 816-459-1490

Employee Support Services

Kenny Alexander 816-459-1226

Health and Safety

Ed Samborski 816-459-1210 • Terry Tharp 816-459-1407

Ulysses Bales 816-459-1605 • Joe Camper 816-459-5559

Dave Sambol 816-459-1223

Quality

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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Cities increasingly protect worker rights

Economic Policy Institute

A new report from the Economic Policy Institute, the Harvard Labor and Worklife Program, and Local Progress details the growing involvement of cities and other localities in protecting workers in recent years.

Some of the most noteworthy actions described include:

- 52 localities have enacted their own higher local minimum wages.

- At least 20 localities have created or are creating dedicated local labor agencies that enforce workers' rights laws—including Chicago, Denver, Minneapolis, New York City, Saint Paul, and Seattle.

- Certain cities have passed cutting-edge laws like fair workweek, just cause protections, and gig worker protections.

- A number of localities have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by requiring hazard and premium pay and paid sick leave.

These actions come as working people in the United States face many challenges and demand change. Outdated labor laws are skewed against workers trying to form and join unions. Public enforcement resources are inadequate, and workers increasingly are unable to bring their claims in court because of forced arbitration. Local policies and enforcement that ensure workers are able to meet their basic needs are foundational to building healthy, thriving, and equitable communities.

"In recent years, there has been a surge of action by local governments around the country in advancing workers' rights. Cities and other localities have become innovators and leaders in standing up for working people. Our report offers a roadmap for local leaders nationwide, from large cities to small towns, to explore the many

ways they can use their powers to improve workers' lives," said Terri Gerstein, director of the State and Local Enforcement Project at the Harvard Labor and Worklife Program and a senior fellow at EPI.

"Seattle has led the way on groundbreaking labor standards—from the \$15 minimum wage to the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights to protections for TNC drivers and gig workers—and our economy is healthier for it," said Teresa Mosqueda, Seattle City Councilmember. "As cities across the country recover from the economic impacts of COVID-19, we must invest in innovative new labor protections as well as enforcement to ensure these policies aren't just pieces of paper. I commend Local Progress, the Economic Policy Institute, and the Harvard Labor and Worklife Program for this comprehensive review of labor policies across municipalities; learning from other municipalities and continuing to push for innovation is vital."

"Cities and localities are necessary actors in the effort to expand and enforce workers' rights—and strong worker protections are foundational to thriving and equitable communities," said LiJia Gong, policy and legal director at Local Progress. "There is meaningful work currently happening at the local level, but there is also untapped potential for much more local action. Local policymakers, enforcers, advocates, and community members must work together to pilot new local laws to benefit workers and their families."

Labor News From the World Wide Web

The Picket Line

Missouri Supreme Court hears collective bargaining rights case

The Missouri Supreme Court heard arguments May 24 in a case challenging whether a 2018 law eliminating the "merit system" for hiring and firing state government employees unconstitutionally interferes with unionized workers' collective bargaining rights.

Just over a year ago, Cole County Circuit Judge Jon Beetem ruled Gov. Mike Parson's administration violated the constitutional rights of unionized state employees when it stopped adhering to valid labor contracts after the passage of Senate Bill 1007. The law abandoned the merit system, which ended political patronage in state government hiring when it was adopted 70 years earlier. Under SB 1007, most state workers now are "at-will" employees who "may be discharged for no reason or any reason not prohibited by law."

Beetem ruled that nothing in SB 1007 restricts the collective bargaining rights of state workers or supersedes negotiated labor agreements. However, Beetem said the Parson administration violated the constitution by acting as if it did. Beetem ordered the state to resume good-faith negotiations with the state employee unions.

The Supreme Court will issue a ruling in the state's appeal of Beetem's decision at a later date. The case is American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, et al., v. State of Missouri. — *State Rep. Ashley Aune*

UAW increases strike pay to \$400 per week

After a meeting of the UAW International Executive Board, the UAW announced today that it has increased its weekly strike pay for members from \$275 per week to \$400 per week. Eligibility for weekly benefits will still begin on the 8th day of a strike. In addition, the UAW eliminated a provision that a member may not receive UAW strike benefits if the member received unemployment benefits.

"UAW members who strike are fighting to hold their employers accountable," says UAW President Ray Curry. "Our striking members and their families deserve our solidarity, and this increased benefit will help them hold the line." — *UAW*

UAW applauds Ford Motor Company for converting 3000 temps to full time

"This announcement is a testament to UAW members who contribute their skill, experience, and knowledge to the success of Ford Motor Company," says UAW President Ray Curry. "We are always advocating to employers and legislators that union jobs are worth the investment. Ford stepped up to the plate by adding these jobs and converting 3000 UAW members to permanent, full-time status with benefits."

"The essential necessity of quality healthcare and full-time employment are longstanding principles that have been communicated to the Company by the UAW International Union and our UAW Local Unions since our inception," adds UAW Vice President and Director of UAW's Ford Department Chuck Browning. "I applaud the actions of Ford Motor Company to address these issues outside the realm of collective bargaining. These unprecedented steps taken by Bill Ford Jr. and CEO Jim Farley are both a refreshing and innovative approach to labor relations that delivers great benefit when most needed by our hard-working members." — *UAW*

UAW strike at Case New Holland continues

Members of United Auto Workers Local 807 continue to strike Friday, June 10, at the Case New Holland Industrial. Case is a agricultural implements manufacturer located in Burlington, Iowa. — *Iowa Hawkeye*



Local 249 members at the Ford Motor Kansas City Assembly plant welcomed news that Ford will add a shift in the Transit System, hire 1,100 new workers and convert more than 500 temps to full time in progression workers. Photo by Don Lehman.

Ford to convert 500 temps to full time, add Transit shift and hire 1,100 workers at KCAP

By Pat Hayes

Temp workers at KCAP who have weathered repeated supply chain related layoffs were overjoyed at the UAW-Ford announcement they will soon be converted to full time in-progression. For these temp workers, the change will mean more job security, better pay, vacation time, improved medical coverage and sick days.

The June 2 announcement by the UAW and Ford means that more than 500 temp workers at KCAP will join approximately 3,000 Ford temps nationwide in moving up to in-progression status.

There was more good news for Local 249 members in the announcement. The company will invest \$95 million, hire 1,100 new union workers and launch a third shift at Kansas City Assembly Plant to increase production of the Transit, America's best-selling commercial van, and the all-new E-Transit electric van.

"Our plant is home to two of the hottest selling vehicles in America, the F-150 and Transit," said Bargaining Chair Jim Fisher. "We're proud of those

numbers, because they reflect on the hard work of our members and the quality of the products we build."

The UAW and Ford also announced plans to add more than 6,200 new U.S. manufacturing jobs in the Midwest and provide all hourly employees healthcare benefits on the first day of employment.

The investment at KCAP is part of a \$3.7 billion investment in manufacturing facilities across Ohio, Michigan and Missouri. The new UAW-Ford manufacturing jobs are expected to result in the creation of an estimated 74,000 additional indirect non-Ford jobs nationally, based on a 2020 study by BCG on the economic impact of F-Series production.

In Michigan, Ford will invest \$2 billion and hire 3,200 union workers to increase production of the all-new F-150 Lightning electric truck to 150,000 per year at Rouge Electric Vehicle Center in Dearborn, produce an all-new Ranger pickup at Michigan Assembly Plant in Wayne and an all-new Mustang coupe at Flat Rock Assembly Plant.

In Ohio, Ford plans to invest \$1.5 billion and create 1,800 union jobs at Ohio Assembly Plant to assemble an all-new EV commercial vehicle starting mid-decade.

The UAW and Ford broke with convention by not waiting until formal UAW contract negotiations to announce new vehicles, plant investments and workplace improvements to meet customer demand. The current UAW contract expires in 2023.

"This announcement is a testament to UAW members who contribute their skill, experience and knowledge to the success of Ford Motor Company," said UAW President Ray Curry. "We are

always advocating to employers and legislators that union jobs are worth the investment."

Bill Ford, executive chair of Ford, added that "Ford is America's Number 1 employer of hourly autoworkers, and this investment only deepens our commitment to building great new vehicles – from an all-new Mustang to new EVs – right here in the U.S. in partnership with the UAW," he said. "I am proud that we are investing in the Midwest and taking real action to provide better benefits and working conditions for our workers on the plant floor."

Local 249 President Jason Starr welcomed the news saying, "this announcement is not just great news for our current and future members. These jobs will contribute to the economic security of every town where our members live in Missouri and Kansas. It means better schools and stronger communities, not just for our members, but for everyone."

Local 249 activists attend CBTU Convention

By Robin Taylor

Local 249 civil rights activists Oshumal Butler, Shirley Bell, Neal Byers and Robin Taylor attended the 51st Coalition of Black Trade Unionists Convention in Los Angeles May 25-30. CBTU was founded in 1972 and is the largest independent labor organization representing the views and values of 1.9 million Black trade unionists in the United States and Canada. There are 50 different international and national trade unions represented in CBTU and there are more than 50 chapters in the U.S. and Ontario, Canada.

"It was great reuniting with the CBTU Convention after three long years," said Local 249 member Oshumal Butler. Seeing Congresswoman Maxine Waters speak at 83 years old with so much love, passion and truth was truly the highlight of the convention for me. It was also great to reconnect with my KC Chapter, it felt like family again, if only for a week."

Local 249 members Sadie Bass, Shirley Bell, Oshumal Butler, Neal Byers, Stephanie Shines and Robin Taylor joined more than 800 CBTU delegates and guests listened as CBTU President Terrence L. Melvin reported that, "Black workers, Black communities, Black women, Black youth, Black seniors, Black incarcerated men and women are under siege from all directions."

Melvin's report on the state of black trade unionism warned that, "our very humanity is in peril – stoked by anti-Black racism and by the monstrous big lie of a stolen presidential election. We must come together, now, in this embattled landscape to affirm our

beautiful humanity and to lead the way out of these dark, dark days. True, our plate is full, but we come to L.A. ready to work."

In addition to Melvin, many speakers came from around the world to deliver speeches on legacy, promise, hope and the future of Black trade unionism. Both AFL-CIO National Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond and California State Representative Maxine Waters spoke passionately about the key role black trade unionists play in defending civil and democratic rights.

"As a first-time retiree attending the 51ST CBTU International Convention in Los Angeles," said Local 249 retiree Shirley Bell, "I thought it was very empowering and educational. The theme for retirees was "Power of the Past, Force for the Future". This is to remind us of the legacy we, the people, have led but also to focus on the work ahead. All the speakers on the panel were dynamic and I felt honored to be among other retirees that have led the way."



Local 249 members Shirley Bell, Robin Taylor, Stephanie Shines, Neal Byers, and Sadie Bass attended the 51st CBTU Convention in Los Angeles May 25-30.

The Local 249 delegates' days were full of sessions, and workshops that offered a lot of information, and training along with encouraging ideas.

The CBTU was founded in 1972 by 5 men. One of those men was Nelson "Jack" Edwards, who served as Vice President of the UAW. He was also known for being Walter Reuther's point man for civil rights.

The CBTU aligns with a lot of things we promote as Local 249 members. Solidarity, unionism, and supporting local, state, and federal representatives who support our cause as laborers, unionists, and working-class

people.

Recent trade union organizing victories at Starbucks, Apple and Amazon brought home the central truth that was the theme of the CBTU Convention: "When we fight, we win."

That theme of the convention was like throwing gasoline on a fire for Local 249 activists and so many others at the convention. Because that's who we are and what we do at Local 249. That's what I'll carry with me as I uphold our contract and going into the next contract. Local 249 is truly a force to be reckoned with and "When we fight, we win."



UAW Local 249 and the Ford Motor Kansas City Assembly Plant were well represented by Sade Ott, Darroyce Thornton, Heather Vogan, Gerard Coiffard, Courtney Anchors and Erin Miller June 10 at the Pridefest celebration in Kansas City. Photo by Don Lehman.

MISSOURI
July 6 is the last day to register to vote in Missouri in order to vote in the August 2 Primary Election

KANSAS
July 12 is the last day to register to vote in Kansas in order to vote in the August 2 Primary Election



Local 249 celebrated Juneteenth by honoring 750 African Americans buried in the segregated sections of Fairview and New Hope Cemeteries in Liberty with a donation to the Liberty African-American Legacy Memorial. Local 249 President Jason Starr, Shirley Mata, Lynn Bosler, Jay Bosler, Erica Eckart, Cecelia Davis, Naoyanna Andrews Morris, Gary Thomas, State Sen. Lauren Arthur and State Rep. Mark Ellebracht were on hand for the dedication. Photo by Don Lehman.

Local 249 activists commemorate Juneteenth

By Erica Eckart

In honor of Juneteenth and the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863, members from Local 249 standing committees took to the streets of Liberty and participated in the solemn dedication of a memorial honoring more than 750 African Americans buried in the segregated sections of Fairview and New Hope Cemeteries on June 17 and 18.

President Abraham Lincoln signed a proclamation that freed all slaves on January 1, 1863, as the nation approached its third year of the civil war. The proclamation declared "that all persons held as slaves" within the rebellious states "are, and henceforward shall be free."

"The civil war was still going," says Dr. Cecelia Robinson, local historian and member of the Clay County African American Legacy. "No one in the border states like Missouri or Texas knew that they had been freed. They didn't have phones or email or anything like what we have now to communicate so Colonel Gordon Granger went all the way to Galveston Texas to let the enslaved know that they had been freed, that was in 1865, some people joked that they were riding a mule to Texas. The people of Texas were the first to hold a Juneteenth celebration. Liberty held its first Juneteenth celebration in 1989."

Organizers designed the Juneteenth parade route to represent the African American struggle in Liberty.

Main street is normally a one-way street going south. Moving the parade in the opposite direction of the normal traffic pattern symbolizes the African American travels north from enslavement following the emancipation proclamation.

Leading the parade were the Gateway Highsteppers Drill Team, followed by three of our own Kansas City, UAW made F-150's and bringing up the rear was a parade float depicting the Sankofa Bird, which symbolizes the idea of going back to the past to bring forward that which is useful. The parade route was short but carried such a strong emotional meaning. The parade rested in front of Garrison school with a powerful prayer and a message of strength, wisdom and unity.

Throughout history the UAW and Civil Rights Activists have had a long standing, strong relationship. UAW former president Walter Reuther often said Labor rights and civil rights go hand in hand. He stood firm on those beliefs, matching word with action,

and today the UAW still stands firm on those beliefs.

UAW Local 249's president Jason Starr is carrying on that Legacy. On behalf of Local 249 the Clay County African American Legacy was presented with a \$30,000 check to help fund much needed Garrison school projects from parking lots, the Sankofa Bird memorial art installation and monuments honoring over 700 former slaves buried in unmarked graves in Liberty's Fairview and Hope cemeteries.

Overall, Local 249 and Midwest states CAP have donated 80,000 of the 135,000 total to support and honor these monumental improvements.

"Jason, Local 249 and the Region 4 CAP Council have been standing strong with us," said Brother A.J Byrd, President of the CCAAL. "We cannot say enough about the UAW and how they've stood with us in the community. They've made a real difference."

The two historical sites, Fairview Cemetery and Garrison School, were once segregated areas in Liberty for African Americans prior to integration. "Prior to 1865 it was against the law to teach a slave to read or write," explains a member of the CCAAL. "for more than a century, Liberty African Americans lived under 'separate but equal' educa-

tion. When the civil war ended, African Americans first attended a private school located on west Mill for Black and Indian children in the home of Laura Armstrong, a liberal white woman. Later during this period Lucretia Robinson opened her home on North Water Street for the tutoring of Blacks. The third school was in the Old Rock Church from 1875-79 which stood on the hill near the present site of Garrison."

Garrison School was established in 1877. It was named after William Lloyd Garrison, an abolitionist who served in Abraham Lincoln's cabinet. Garrison school earned the reputation of being the best school for African American students in the state of Missouri.

Today the Garrison school is owned by the CCAAL and is used as office space for the organization and as a recreational center for cultural and educational events. In front of the Garrison building is the Sankofa Bird Symbol monument. It is a centerpiece art installation and logo for the American Legacy Memorial depicting a bird flying forward with its head turned backward with an egg in its mouth. The egg represents the knowledge of the past upon which wisdom is based. It also signifies that the generation to come will benefit from that wisdom.

Local 249 retirees honor veterans

By Natalie Wood

Thank you, Roberta Roberson, for making six quilts to give to our veterans. A drawing was held and veterans who drew a winning ticket received a quilt. These members were blessed to receive a beautiful quilt: Roy Davidson, Eldon "Tarzan" Kincheloe, Ruben Martinez, Larry Summers, Lori Marin and Wally Glasco. Once again thank you Roberta Roberson for the lovely quilts.

Benefits Rep. Steve Hibbs reported that our August 17 meeting will have guest speakers from Blue Cross/Blue Shield, UAW Retiree Health Care Trust and United Health Care. So come on out and load up on information about your benefits and health care.

At our June 15 retirees meeting, attendance was low. There were 30 members. I'm not so sure why. At our May 25 meeting we had 70 members. Let's aim for a higher attendance for our July 20 retirees meeting.

We are still working on our elevator and hope to have it up and running for our next meeting.

We honor our retirees every chance we get. Those that had wedding anniversaries for the month of June are Claude and Shirley Bell, who celebrated 37 years, and Mel and Gene

Thompson, who celebrated 25 years. Shirley Bell won the anniversary prize. Our birthdays for the month of June are Wally Glasco and Natalie Wood. We sang happy anniversary and birthday and congratulations to all.

A question came up about our picnic for 2022. The third Wednesday of September, we will have a picnic here at Local 249. This will take place of our regular retirees meeting. So, mark your calendars for September 21 at 10:30 am.

Please keep your contact information current at Local 249. If you have moved since retiring, we need that information updated, if ever we have to cancellation, we need to be able to call and inform you.

To keep everyone as safe as possible we are continuing with our box lunches. Which consists of sandwiches



Local 249 retirees view an American Flag quilt sewn by Roberta Roberson, one of six, raffled off at the June meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

(turkey, ham, beef) chips, cookie and fruit. We ask that you not bring any food from home. This is to keep us safe due to COVID. Masks are not required at this time but wear one if you like.

We must report the good news as well as the bad. We loss Gene Ma-

cintyre recently. Keep his family in your prayers.

Let's work on getting more people out to our July 20 meeting. We can do this. There were 30 members at our June meeting we can beat this on our July meeting. Come on out. You'll be glad you did.



Members of Local 249's Women's Committee Janelle Jones, front row left to right, Daniella Garcia and Kaylee Nowland, second row, Lameasia Harris and Stephanie Henderson, back row Robin Taylor, Courtney Draffen, Porsche Thomas, Diedre' Brown, NaTisha Johnson, and Lena Wiley. volunteered at Mother's Refuge, a shelter for homeless, pregnant and parenting young women.



Ryley Mathis, left, was presented with the James "Frog" Moran Solidarity Award at the June Membership Meeting by Education Committee Chair Gary Thomas. Mathis won the solidarity award when a temporary autoworker at KCAP had his car towed by Ford Motor Company. Mathis offered to take his coworker home, but in the middle of the ride, he instead drove himself home and gave the temp the keys to his car so he had a way to get to work all week.



Missouri State Rep. Mark Ellebracht speaks June 18 at the dedication of the Liberty African American Legacy the site of 750 unmarked graves of African Americans. Local 249 and UAW Region 4 CAP helped provide funding to construct the memorial. Photo by Don Lehman.

Memorial honors “those known only to God”

By Cecelia Davis

UAW 249 took a remarkable trip back in time with the city of Liberty June 18, in honoring a burial ground containing the unmarked graves of 750 African Americans in Liberty’s Fairview and New Hope Cemeteries, the site of the newly dedicated Liberty African American Legacy Memorial.

Juneteenth is dedicated to the day in 1865 when the slaves in Texas were told that they have been liberated by union army general Gordan Granger. The news took up to 3 years to travel throughout the United States after the Emancipation Proclamation. The Proclamation declares, by President Abraham Lincoln, “that all persons held as slaves, within the rebellious states, are and henceforward shall be free.” Following up to those last three years, many slaves had lost their lives in search for freedom not knowing that they were already legally free.

In late September 2021, Local 249 donated \$25,000 to help the city

of Liberty recognize the many African Americans who created the streets of Liberty with every ounce of blood, sweat, and tears only to be buried in unmarked graves.

Day laborers, war veterans, children, people who were enslaved and many others were all buried within the cemetery’s six acres. Fast forward to today, the Clay County African American Legacy raised funds to create a memorial that finally names all 750 of those buried there.

“Like the Akan people of generations past,” African American Legacy “seeks to honor, recognize, and preserve the legacy of a stalwart and resilient race of African Americans who have historically been segregated,

marginalized, and forgotten. The knowledge of the past must never be forgotten. Uniting two historical sites, Fairview Cemetery and Garrison school that were once segregated areas in Liberty for African Americans prior to integration.”

The ceremony to unveil the monument was so beautiful that words almost can’t describe it. As you enter the pathway to travel towards the monument, you are greeted with the names of those buried there. Inspirational poems and quotes guide visitors toward the monument in honor of those buried in this hallowed ground.

The dedication started with a slow beat of the drum, as members of the Prince Hall Free Masons of Missouri came marching slowly down the path. They then proceeded to sing the Negro National Anthem, led by Diana Allenwood, a resident of Liberty. Next, there were multiple speeches made by the historians, donors, Liberty

Mayor Lyndell Brenton, State Rep. Mark Ellebracht and State Sen. Lauren Arthur.

As the ceremony ended, descendants of those buried there presented themselves at the granite monument in search of their family names. Such a magnificent moment to witness. That their loved ones, after all these years, have finally been acknowledged.

“There were people in our community that were able to find the people that were buried in the cemetery by name,” said Local 249 President Jason Starr. “They were able to reunite their families from all over the country, so to watch those families go to the monument and touch the names that were etched in that granite was a very emotional experience”

“I would like to thank the membership for giving us the ability to go out and participate in that event because the conversations we had afterwards were very powerful,” added Starr.

UAW raises strike pay to \$400 a week

By Jim Fisher

After a meeting of the UAW International Executive Board, the UAW announced June 7 that it increased its weekly strike pay for members from \$275 per week to \$400 per week. Eligibility for weekly benefits will still begin on the 8th day of a strike. In addition, the UAW eliminated a provision that a member may not receive UAW strike benefits if the member received unemployment benefits.

The UAW Strike and Defense Fund also covers benefits such as medical and prescription drugs. The current balance in the UAW strike fund is approximately \$850 million, up from \$739 million in 2019.

"UAW members who strike are fighting to hold their employers accountable," says UAW President Ray Curry. "Our striking members and their families deserve our solidarity, and this increased benefit will help them hold the line."

Over the past couple of years the UAW has shown the willingness to take on large corporations. In 2019 the UAW struck General Motors for 40 days. In 2021 the UAW struck John Deere for 35 days, and currently the UAW and Case New Holland have been on strike since May 2. UAW members have also struck several supplier facilities across the country.

Just in case companies negotiating with the UAW needed more confirmation that members are expecting their fair share in upcoming negotiations, the International sent a clear message they are preparing to stand with members both at the bargaining table and with financial support.

As a result of the UAW taking a firm stand on key issues, UAW-Ford members have seen several significant improvements. As most members know, the UAW Ford Department reached a resolution to fix the "leapfrog" pay issues a couple of months ago. Not only have locals received support on enforcing the TFT percentages inside the facilities, but in June it was announced that an additional 3,000 TFT members across the country would be converting to full time.

Since January of last year Local 249 has converted over 1,300 members from TFT status to Full Time In-Progression, and most of those members have been converted well ahead of the timetable in the National agreement. The UAW recently announced additional jobs and investments in both our plant, and at the Ohio Assembly Plant.

I'm sure everyone has their own expectation level for when it becomes our turn in September of 2023. But for now, these victories have been a well needed breath of fresh air.

On a local level there are several meetings taking place on the Transit System launch of the new C-Crew. Timing on this will largely depend on the company's success at hiring an additional 1,100 new members. Some departments will see the C-Crew schedule faster than other departments. Recently the bids for a C-Crew Pre-Delivery Department were posted. Those members who won the bids are being contacted and training dates for those new positions are scheduled to start in Mid-July.

The plan is to have the 3-Crew pattern (A,B,&C-Crew) for the Transit Pre-delivery Department operational in August of this year. This will allow for additional training if needed,



Local 249 Bargaining Chair Jim Fisher announced that the UAW increased strike pay to \$400 a week at the June membership meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

and the ability to continue to repair Transits with shy parts faster, to help delivery to our customers in a timely manner.

The Transit Press and Sub areas

will also be adjusting to a 3-Crew Pattern closer towards the start of the fourth quarter. Again, for the rest of the departments, the exact timing will be dependent on the hiring process.



The Ford Inmates softball team won the Local 249 Spring Softball League sponsored by the union's Conservation and Recreation Committee. The committee sponsors a variety of fun opportunities for Local 249 members including leisure time activities such as fishing, cornhole and golf tournaments. It also sponsors conservation and environmental activities like the recent Stream Clean event.

Hard work and activism defines Local 249

By Jason Starr

Despite the heat in recent weeks, Local 249 members continue to outperform all others in the auto industry – We have also been making progress on a large number of important initiatives with our Standing Committees. The heat in the plant is oppressive, I’m proud that so many active members show up after work to keep our union and the communities we live in strong. I would like to highlight just a few of the projects we’ve completed in the last month and others that are upcoming.

We held Education Committee classes at our Union Hall in June for day shift, night shift, and C-Crew with over 100 members attending. We will hold the next round of monthly Education Committee Classes for members July 19 through 22 at the Union Hall.

To attend these shift-specific classes Members must be willing to sign up to make at least one of three commitments to build the power of our Union. First, and most importantly we are seeking members who are willing to sign up to be shop floor activists. This requires a commitment to read and understand our contractual rights, educate our brothers and sisters, and take direct action on the floor to advance the interest of our Union every day on the floor.

Another option is to join a Standing Committee to give their time, energy, and passion to the work our Union does socially, economically, and politically in our community.

Lastly, if you are unable to make the commitment to becoming a shop floor activist or standing committee member we are directly asking for your V-CAP contributions to give us the much-needed resources to do the very important work we do in our community. If you have a desire to

be a UAW Activist and you are willing to make one or hopefully all of these commitments and you would like to attend a future Education Committee class, please contact your district committeeperson to get signed up.

The Member to Member Committee continues to conduct survey and communication work. The committee was most recently on the floor in the Truck System the week of June 20. Committee members were on the floor for three days to distribute surveys and educational materials to gain an understanding of issues as our members see them.

We will use the information that was collected to design future communications to address the concerns highlighted by our members. The committee will also engage with our members about contractual and shop floor issues. All the surveys are delivered to me. I read them all and then share the information with our leadership team.

New episodes of the Local 249 Solidarity Academy Podcast are available on Anchor FM by Spotify. The podcast is for UAW members, the union community, and beyond to learn about solidarity. Join us to learn how to better navigate through the trials and tribulations of the shop floor



Local 249 President Jason Starr recognizes a member to speak during discussion at the June membership meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

experience. Members who would like to listen to the podcast will find a link at the bottom of Local 249's web page: www.local249.org.

The fireworks tent will open in the union parking lot across from the plant from June 25 through July 4. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to Local 249 standing committees to fund our union's community service work.

The 2022 UAW Local 249 Picnic will be held on Monday, Sept. 5, at La-Benite Riverfront Park. The picnic will be a huge event with rides, inflatable attractions, entertainment, and tons of food. The picnic is free to our members and their families. The details will be made available after the July shutdown when members can begin picking up bracelets for the event.

The new Local 249 Online Store is open at www.UAW249Store.com. At the online store, members can purchase union-made, American-made shirts and hoodies with all proceeds going towards our standing committees to fund member events and community action.

Case New Holland is still on Strike and entering the second month. Local 249 is committed to donating \$5000 per month to the striking workers. Midwest State CAP is also donating \$10,000 to the workers and their families. In addition, our standing committees will deliver needed goods and walk the strike lines with our brothers and sisters.

The UAW International has raised Strike Pay to \$400 a week plus health-

care. This is a great benefit to those members currently on strike and is clearly an indication of what we can expect in our own contractual negotiation in 2023. Our members should pay very close attention to the actions our Union is taking and begin preparations over the next year to put our families in the best possible position to sustain a potential strike.

Congratulations to the nearly 500 members at our Local that recently converted to permanent status. This is a huge victory for these members and their families as they are converted well ahead of the contractual requirements.

The addition of the Transit System shift is a great opportunity for our local to continue its growth and secure our futures. Bringing in 1,100 new members will without doubt be a challenge, but we are confident that in the end, our members will make the launch of the new shift a success.

The work Local 249 members do at this local is showing results. We can see this in the new hiring and investment at KCAP and in the solidarity shown by our community partners and allies who hold elective office. This work is designed to build power in our membership, and it is paying off.

I know we all have our frustrations and things we want to see change – believe me I get frustrated too – but on days like these we should all take the time to reflect on how blessed we are to be UAW Members. To be so thankful for what we have and the work that we do as a local.



Local 249 President Jason Starr presented a check for \$30,000 to the Clay County African American Legacy project June 17 at the dedication of the Garrison School Cultural Center. Photo by Shirley Mata.

By the people, for the people perishing in Missouri

By State Sen. Lauren Arthur

In just the past few years, Missouri has legalized medical marijuana, expanded access to health insurance coverage, raised the minimum wage, and repealed the state's Right-to-Work law. None of these things happened because the legislature passed a bill. None happened because the Governor signed them into law. Each one of these policies came about by a vote of the people of Missouri. Ordinary Missourians used their vote at the ballot box to implement the policies that were important to them.

And the people in power didn't like that - so now the politicians in Jefferson City want to change the rules so that it becomes far less likely that voters will be able to do this in the future. They're advancing a wide-ranging proposal to make it much harder for citizens to put forward policy initiatives through constitutional amendments and referendums.

It's already hard to pass laws through the initiative petition process. It's expensive and requires large numbers of workers and volunteers. Something I bet you know first hand from the hard work UAW did to defeat Right-to-Work and Prop A. Politicians want to make it even harder - rigging the system and changing the rules of the game at the same time. Perhaps most troublingly, they want to require an initiative to get two-thirds support from the voters instead of a simple majority to pass.

You see, Missouri's government is singularly controlled by one party: the Republicans. They have a large super-majority in the legislature, and they hold the Governor's Office. They can pass any bill they want without a single vote from a member of the Democratic minority. If it were up to them, none of these popular policies would have ever come about.

Back in 2017, the super-majority Republican legislature passed a law making Missouri a so-called Right-to-Work state. The Republican Governor signed the bill into law, which would have gone into effect in 2018. But, it never did.

That's because organized labor did what you do best; you organized. In this case, you used a right afforded by the state constitution to petition for a statewide referendum on a law passed by the legislature. By gathering the hundreds of thousands of signatures required to get the referendum on the ballot you put implementation of the Right-to-Work law on hold pending a vote of the people.

When the election was scheduled for the late summer of 2018, labor and your allies got to work campaigning for repeal of the so-

called Right-to-Work law. And when the votes of ordinary Missourians were counted, the result was an overwhelming rejection of the law. As a result, Missouri has never been a Right-to-Work state.

However, if the Republicans succeed in their latest effort to wreck the initiative petition and referendum process, we could very well become a Right-to-Work state in short order.

That's why it is essential that working Missourians who rejected it in 2018, and who voted for popular policies such as healthcare expansion and raising the wage, to make their voices heard in opposition to so-called initiative petition reform. If Republican legislators don't listen, hold them accountable by voting them out of office.

Without access to the ballot, many popular policies that improve the lives of working Missouri families would never see the light of day. Without the ability to access the referendum process, I have little doubt that this legis-



Missouri State Sen. Lauren Arthur says that, "without access to the ballot, many popular policies that improve the lives of working Missouri families will never see the light of day. Photo by Don Lehman.

lature and Governor would implement so-called Right-to-Work in an instant. We can't let that happen.

It's vital that organized labor again do what you do best: organize. It's going

to take every one of us - republicans, democrats, and independents alike - to stop them from making Missouri's working families worse off by taking away this important tool for change.



Local 249 Community Service members Melody Decoudres, left to right, Stephanie Taggart, Elicia Salazar-Banuelos, Cortez Bradley, Luteesha Hall, Charla Patrick, Lena Wiley, Carla Pouncil, Deneane Pouncil, Jacquie Childs, Sydne Donaldson, Darriean Diaz, Hunter Himes, Porsche Thomas, Nitisha Johnson, Lynn Brown, Stephanie Henderson, Robin Taylor, Nicole Holbert-Zabel, Davion Gray, Nathan Himes, Hilary Johnson, Sadie Bass, Shauncei Gray, Stephanie Carruth-Shines, Terri Aquino volunteered to renovate a home for Habitat for Humanity June 15. Photo by Don Lehman.



Lena Wiley, and Womens' Committee Chair Robin Taylor, center, Kaylee Nowland, left to right, Raina Lawrence, Sadie Bass, Diedre' Brown, Stephanie Henderson, Brittanie Wilson, Stielita Locke, Stephanie Taggart, Amanda Trevino, Kenna Gomel, Lynn Brown from Local 249's Womens Committee helped clean the Community LINC Homeless Shelter June 3. Photo by Don Lehman.

UAW Local 249 activists aid area homeless

By Robin Taylor

Local 249's Women's and Community Service committee activists volunteered June 10 at Community LINC, a part of the housing first initiative that has been aiding the homeless population of Kansas City for 36 years. They offer a variety of housing and program assistance for the homeless who sign up.

Local 249 volunteers split into two groups and tackled the task of cleaning and setting up the apartments for families to move in. This isn't a job to be taken lightly. The families moving into the apartment homes have nothing. The committees furnished the apartments with donated furniture and household items provided by various donors.

Local 249 had several volunteers that day. Newcomers Kaylee Nowland, Brittanie Wilson, Amanda Trevino, and Courtney Draffen said they were "grateful for the opportunity to help. They had fun and enjoyed giving back

to the community we live in as UAW members."

Community Service Chairperson Sadie Bass said she "felt like the organization was very organized, transparent, and informative. You knew exactly what was expected after the walk through. It was an enjoyable and enlightening experience to offer someone else a hand up." Bass said she's looking forward to the next volunteer event.

"This was a very rewarding, and fulfilling experience," said Stephanie Taggart. She enjoyed volunteering

and giving back to a worthy cause that touched her spirit.

Lynn Brown, a Women's Committee member said she felt good about giving back to the homeless in our community. Stephanie Henderson added, "I love working with organizations like this, in bringing these families off the streets. We are union workers that provide for our families and being a part of a strong union keeps us from facing the same situation. I am grateful and humbled by this experience".

Community LINC provides several goal driven services for parents and children. They own six apartment buildings, and they are working hard to get them renovated, set up, and move in ready. All six apartment buildings are capable of housing up to 28 families. In addition to that, they have two homes, 13 lots and they are looking for more.

Community LINC wants to help families purchase homes through affordable means and opportunities. Community LINC helps the homeless through voluntary donations. A large portion of those donations are raised through the Neighbors Helping Neighbors annual Rent Party. This year's rent party will be held October 8, 2022.

They need the following donated items: cribs, queen, full, twin-size beds and bed rails. Comforters and linens for all bed sizes listed. Microwaves, coffee pots, toasters, blenders, etc. Sofas, loveseats, chairs, end tables, coffee tables, throw pillows, vases, artificial flowers or plants, and televisions. If you're thinking about sitting it out on the curb, dropping off at Goodwill, or throwing it in the trash. Instead, please think of Community LINC, they can put your donations to good use.