

FIRST LOCAL NEWS

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

September 2022



**Manpower
issues slow
production at
KCAP | p 9**

**Local 249
gearing up
for the fall
| p 10**

International Union United Auto,
Aerospace and Agricultural Workers Local 249
8040 NE 69 Highway
Pleasant Valley, MO 64068
© 2022 UAW

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

Jason Starr, left, passed the gavel of leadership at Local 249 to Tony Renfro at the August membership meeting. Starr has accepted a job as UAW Region 4 International Servicing Rep. Renfro, who served as vice president at the local, will step into the president's role. Photo by Don Lehman.



Local 249 member Cole Mills and his family campaigned door to door for State Rep. Ashley Aune Aug. 25 with the union CAP Committee. Aune represents Platte and Clay Counties, District 14, in the Missouri House of Representatives.



David Armes, left, and Dusty Rukavina, accepted the James "Frog" Moran Solidarity Award from the Local 249 Education Committee at the August membership meeting. They found a fellow coworker unresponsive on the road leading out of the plant and helped stabilize their coworker and called the proper authorities. Photo by Don Lehman.



Motorcycle Committee members Joshua Curtis, left to right, and Darren Piper present winner Jason Zabel, center, with his custom built AR-15 built by B&J Gunworks as committee members Joe Lumpkin and Darrin McIntire look on. Photo by Don Lehman.

First Local News

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

Editor Pat Hayes

Reporters Cecelia Davis, Erica Eckart, Chrissy Kline and Gwen Starkey
Photographer Don Lehman

UAW Local 249

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

Officers of Local 249

President Tony Renfro

1st Vice President

2nd Vice President Tom Carr

Recording Secretary Shirley Mata

Financial Secretary Dana Davidson

Treasurer Chrissy Kline

Trustees Ed Scaggs, Jeremy Fue, Sade Ott

Sergeant at Arms Jay Bosler

Guide Gary Thomas

Bargaining Chair Jim Fisher

Bargaining Committee Steve Chorbak, Dean Freed and Don Picard

Skilled Trades Bargaining Committee Member Scott Pyle

Parts Depot Bargaining Chair Brandon Zarda

Nurse's Bargaining Chair Barb Patton

Team Solutions Bargaining Chair David Norris

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

Visit Local 249 on the web at www.local249.org

Like Local 249 on Facebook www.facebook.com/local249

Follow us on Twitter @UAWLocal249



The Picket Line

Workers say sudden closing of Plaza Starbucks about union-busting, not safety

About five minutes. That's how much notice workers at the Starbucks on the Country Club Plaza had before the company permanently closed the store.

"Starbucks sat the workers that were in this location down and said effective at 3:30 p.m. today (August 22) this store is no longer operating because of safety and security reasons," said Josh Crowell, a barista at the store at 302 Nichols Road.

"That was basically all they all they gave us. Starbucks Corporation believes that we as workers are safer not working here is what they essentially told us." T

Crowell was among about 10 workers who gathered Tuesday morning outside the store to protest the closing, saying they believe the true reason the store was closing was that workers were trying to unionize.

"I think a fair amount of it (the reason for the closing) is union busting," said Crowell, who was part of the organizing committee for the Starbucks union. "With our tight election, I think Starbucks decided to shut down the store because they thought it was easier just to shut down the store than to have to deal with that." — *The Kansas City Star*

United Auto Workers-Case New Holland strike passes 90-day mark in Burlington

United Auto Workers in Burlington, Iowa, and Racine, Wisconsin have been on strike for three months now. The union is asking Case New Holland for better pay, healthcare and working conditions.

The company and the UAW bargaining team were last at the table in mid-June. However, membership has yet to even vote on an offer. Despite that, union members on the picket line stand behind union leadership.

Local 807 President Nick Guernsey said CNH is simply not meeting the union's demands.

"The ones that care the most are out and the ship sinking," Guernsey said. "We'll see what happens though when [company representatives] want to get real."

CNH offered UAW leadership a deal in late May, which included an 18.5% increase over three years. However, the offer wasn't voted on by union members as the bargaining team felt it wouldn't cover the cost of inflation.

"We're waiting for a serious offer, they haven't been serious the whole time, they were serious about trying to break us," Guernsey said. [Once a dollar amount] gets triggered then enough's enough, let's get real, and then both sides gets real and we go back to work."

Replacement workers are operating the lines in Burlington. While these temporary employees are spending money in the city's hotels and restaurants, Mayor Jon Billups said it's time to get people who live in and around Burlington back to work. — *KWQC Burlington*

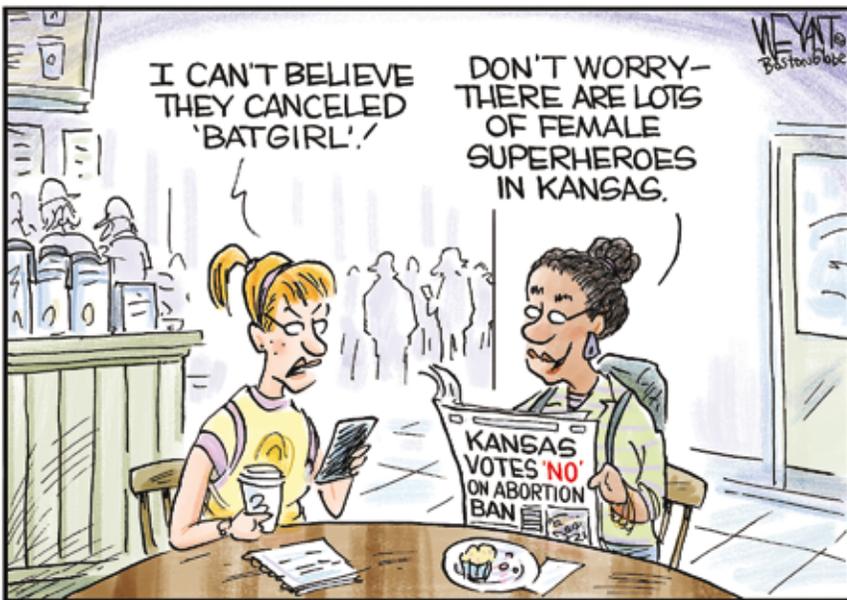
General Electric workers in Alabama launch union organizing campaign

GE workers at a plant in Alabama said on August 22 they have launched a campaign to form a union for better pay and job security.

The plant in Auburn, Alabama, employs 179 workers. It builds a fuel nozzle on the widely used LEAP jet engine which powers planes of Airbus and Boeing.

After decades of declining power and influence, the COVID-19 pandemic and labor shortage have sparked a resurgence in union organizing across the United States. Union leaders say efforts by President Joe Biden to put unions at the center of policy have also given the U.S. labor movement significant momentum.

The unionization efforts have resulted in some notable union victories at companies including Apple, Starbucks and Amazon. — *Reuters*



Lawsuit alleges new Missouri state senate districts unconstitutional

By State Rep. Wes Rogers

A lawsuit filed July 27 alleges the new state Senate districts drawn earlier this year by a judicial commission violate the state constitution by diluting Black voting strength in St. Louis County and unnecessarily splitting both Buchanan County and the city of Hazelwood among two districts. The suit asks a Cole County judge to block Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft from using the new districts "for any purpose," which presumably includes the Nov. 8 general elections.

The six-member Judicial Redistricting Commission finalized the new Senate districts in March after another commission consisting of equal numbers of Democratic and Republican party members that had first crack at the job failed to agree. Legislative districts must be redrawn every 10 years to reflect population shifts under the most recent U.S. Census.

Because state senators serve staggered four-year terms, only half of the chamber's 34 members are up for re-election every two years. Even-numbered districts are on the ballot this year and are slated to be chosen from the new districts. Senators from odd-numbered seats will continue to represent the "old" version of those districts until the 2024 elections, when the new boundaries for those districts will be first implemented.

Senate primaries were held Aug. 2 under the new districts. The plaintiffs ask the court to replace the new map with one they submitted that they say complies with constitutional requirements by keeping Buchanan County and Hazelwood whole and addressing the racial imbalance in St. Louis County. One the latter point, the plaintiffs' map would shift some communities from the 13th District, which has a Black population of 71 percent, to the neighboring 14th District, where 51

percent of residents are Black, in a move to ensure both districts have solid Black majorities.

However, the Missouri Constitution says if a court rules a redistricting plan unconstitutional, the redistricting process must begin anew with the appointment of another bipartisan commission, as happened in 2012 when the Missouri Supreme Court struck down new Senate districts created in 2011. As a result, it doesn't appear a judge has the power to unilaterally impose new districts as the plaintiffs ask. The case is Clara Faatz, et al., v. John R. Ashcroft, et al.

Feds Intervenes to Reduce Medicaid Application Wait Times

The federal government has intervened to help Missouri's Medicaid program reduce wait times for applicants seeking health care coverage, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported on Aug. 10. Under federal guidelines, wait times shouldn't exceed 45 days but instead have surpassed 100 days in Missouri.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on July 11 approved a plan to assist Missouri in lowering application wait times, the paper reported. The plan sets a goal of achieving the federal standards by Sept. 30. The state could face federal sanctions if it misses the deadline, according to the paper.



Bryant Meyers, left to right, Scott Brawley, Maurice Ramsey, Jackie Cleaves, Nicky Dang and Kennetha "Kaye" Brattin staffed Local 249's booth at the Kansas City Ethnic Enrichment Festival August 19 through 21. Photo by Don Lhman.

Rich mix of cultures at Ethnic Enrichment Festival

By Cecelia Davis

During the weekend of August 19th to the 21st, instead of traveling to different countries to experience different people and cultures, Kansas City decided to bring it to Swope Park calling it, "The Ethnic Enrichment Commission" or what others would call it, "The Ethnic Festival."

The Ethnic Enrichment Festival began in 1976 and is now one of the top ethnic festivals in the nation. It is held every year, on the third full weekend in August. Siew Lau, the EEC Chairperson and Malaysia Commissioner said, "The member countries of the EEC have produced this festival for over 40 years."

Visitors entering the festival, were greeted with many different country flags represented at the event, standing tall as a walkway to guide you in the right direction. If that didn't guide you in, the different foods and spices that filled the air did. Once you enter the gates, they provide each guest with a passport book with a note from the Mayor of Kansas City, Missouri stating,

"the Ethnic Enrichment Commission request all whom it may concern to permit the Citizen/National of the United States named herein to pass without delay or hindrance to obtain stamps of all countries and ethnic groups and in case of need, give all assistance and enjoyment."

These well-made passports were sponsored by our UAW 249. As you look up from your union-made passport, you were instantly surrounded by music, food booths, and multiple vendors full of souvenirs to remember such an exquisite moment.

As you continued to walk straight, there was no chance of missing our own Local 249 booth. Our Local had

the honor of being a top supporter of this festival. The Human and Civil Rights Committee decorated a special booth surrounded with UAW 249 blue balloons, color-changing cups, tattoos, and righteous union information to provide the community with. "It's been an amazing time," said Constance Anderson, who is Co-Chair of the Human and Civil Rights committee. "We have enjoyed the kids, the festival, our union members, and everyone that supported us."

If you weren't waiting in line for food or getting a stamp on your Ethnic Enrichment passport, you were able to watch the many different dance ceremonies in the heart of the festival. Every country had a different time slot to showcase their lovely cultural dance moves and amazing music with vibrant colorful clothing which was sure to turn heads.

There were 35 performances

throughout the weekend. Some of the performers were the Ukrainian Club of KC Dancers, H of A Middle Eastern Dancers, Scandinavian Folk Dancers, The Haitian Experience, and "Tikvah" Israeli Dancers to name a few.

"Besides helping to build the village circle, each country's commission determines the country's booth and stage representation," says Siew Lau. "Our member countries include the founding groups of Scotland, Italy, American Indians, Croatia, and African-Americans. Our Commissions are bound by a mutual interest in preserving and sharing their heritage with the community via music, dance, food, and crafts. It is their mission and their passion."

The EEC has accomplished their mission this year as this was a successful event for everyone and the UAW Local 249 once again had the opportunity to be a part of history.



Members of Local 249's Motorcycle Committee have been going door to door to support labor-friendly candidates for the November election. Sarah Allen, Jacob Scott, William O'Neal, Yang Tran and Steven and Lacey Taylor and Josh Curtis went door to door August 24 to support Jamie Johnson in District 12.

CAP Committee mobilizes for November election

By Erica Eckart

Local 249's CAP Committee is hitting the ground running in preparation for the November election season. Committee members and volunteers have been door knocking and phone banking for labor friendly candidates. All the candidates the union supports have been vetted through an extensive process and must have one thing in common: they must be pro-Labor supporters.

CAP endorsements are based not on political party but on protecting worker rights, fair trade, health and safety, new initiatives for working families and other issues that affect working families.

The union supports candidates who support and fight for working people. The CAP committee assists in voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives, dollar drives, letter writing campaigns, and publicizing the issues and positions of public officials.

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.

"We have seats we have to hold",

said Shirley Mata, Region 4 Midwest States CAP political liaison and recording secretary for Local 249.

"District 14's Ashley Aune is a seat that we must hold with the lines being redistricted; the numbers are a little closer so it's a 50/50 type seat. Aaron Crossley out south in Independence is also a seat we are working on holding. Aaron is an amazing young man; he is a social worker, and he is running and working as much as he can while working his full-time job," says Mata.

"Some of the other candidates we are helping are Jamie Johnson in District 12 in Riverside, Kerri Ingle in Lees Summit, and Robbie Sauls, who represents the north end of Independence and part of Sugar Creek," says Mata. "We need all of the volunteers

we can get, if you live out near one of these areas, I will come work with you and teach you how to do this so that you can do it within your own area so it's a lot more convenient."

Mata has been politically active with Local 249 since 2012. She started out phone banking for Governor Jay Nixon and has been passionate about it ever since. "Our job as union members is at stake, when we are in a Republican-dominated state, the Republicans are the ones that come after us with things like right to work. I do what I do to fight for our members so that they can have a better way of life," said Mata.

Members of Local 249's Motorcycle Committee have been particularly active in going door to door to get out the vote, according to Mata.

"Those are basically the four candidates that we are working for currently," said Jay Bosler, Chair of the Local 249 CAP Committee and Sergeant at Arms.

"Come September, we will start to work for Mark Ellebracht in the new 17th District that encompasses the

plant. We will also be hitting every single door in his district so we will need all hands on deck. We will be looking for committee members and volunteers, doing as many doors as possible," he said.

"I can't stress it any more that we need everyone," said Bosler, "you hear every election that this is the most important election cycle in your lifetime, but honestly it becomes that way, if your continuously losing, and if you're on that losing end you keep digging that hole deeper, then you have to fight, kick or scratch your way out and if we as laborers are gonna just sit back on our heels and not go out there and do the work, then we're never going to have the candidates or the politicians in place to do the work that we need them to do which is protect labor and to keep right to work out of our state."

The CAP committee is looking for volunteers to help with literature delivery, door knocking and phone banking. To find out how you can get involved, reach out to Jay or Shirley by calling the hall.

Local 249 scholarship winners announced

By Pat Hayes

The winners of the 2022 edition of Local 249's annual Charlie Suffridge Scholarship Contest accepted their awards August 24 at the union membership meeting. The contest is open to the dependents of members in good standing of Local 249 who were juniors or seniors in high school during the 2021 – 2022 school year.

Contestants must plan to attend a college, university or trade school the year following graduation. To win, contestants must research and write an essay on issues affecting working people and the labor movement. The contest is sponsored by the union's Education Committee.

The \$5,000 first prize was awarded to Carter Bohannon, the son of member Bert Bohannon, for his essay on labor unions during the Civil Rights Movement. Bohannon attends Grain Valley High school. Excerpts from his prize-winning essay can be found on page 7 of this issue of First Local News.

Mallory Moon, 17, the daughter of Elizabeth and Nathan Moon, won the \$2,500 second prize for her essay on how the COVID-19 Pandemic revealed the need for a robust labor

movement. Moon attends Park Hill High school. She expects to graduate in 2023.

An essay about the role of labor unions in the Civil Rights Movement



by Chris Montez took the \$1,500 third prize. Montez is the son of member Mario Montez. He attends West Platte High school and plans to graduate in 2022.

Kyra Thompson, the granddaughter of retiree Jim Thompson, won the \$1,000 fourth place prize for her essay on how the COVID-19 Pandemic highlighted the need for a robust labor movement. A senior, Thompson, plans to graduate in 2022



Carter Bohannon and Mallory Moon picked up the certificates for their winning essays in the Charlie Suffridge Scholarship Contest at the August membership meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

from Lathrop High school.

The scholarship contest is named after a former Education Committee Chairperson, Charlie Suffridge, who played a pioneering role at Local 249 in educating members and the community in the history and role of the labor movement.

"The labor movement in America led efforts to stop child labor, give health benefits and provide aid to workers who were injured or retired. The struggles of working people led to the signing of the Fair Labor Standards Act, which guaranteed a minimum wage, an eight-hour workday, a 40-hour work week, and time-and-a-half overtime," says Gary Thomas, chair of Local 249's Education Committee.

"And yet that history is almost completely missing from the curriculum of our public schools," he says. "Our scholarship contest is an attempt to keep that history alive for the young workers who will fight the battles of the future to protect the gains of the past and win the battles of the future for working families."

UAW women still making herstory

By Robin Taylor

The 46th International Union UAW Women's Conference was held August 7-12 at the Walter & May Reuther Family Education Center under the direction of Cindy Estrada, the vice president and director of UAW Women's Department. The theme was "Women Making History."

Everyone who attended was challenged to look at the history we are making every day.

While reflecting on the activism of the women who made history by paving the way for us. Everyday started with the soul train line and dance to "We are Family" by Sister Sledge as a show of solidarity. This was followed by a moment of silence for all the women and men we've lost in our great union.

The week was full of themed days. Kicking off the week on Monday was Emergency Brigade Day. This theme paid homage to the Genora Johnson-Dollinger. Genora created the brigade as an expansion to the UAW Women's Auxiliary. Their purpose was to support and defend UAW members who were on strike by any means necessary.

There were many tributes throughout the week, wrapping up the week

with a Rosie The Riveter Day on Friday. The themes were a fun way to show solidarity, while spotlighting women in UAW history, educating, and empowering everyone.

"To say the experience was amazing is an understatement," said Lamaesia Harris. "It was inspiring to see so many people come together, sharing their personal experiences on how the UAW has helped them in their daily lives in and out of work."

Stephanie Henderson was "thankful for this wonderful opportunity. I was able to meet so many great people. Everyone showed up and showed out! The solidarity I encountered reminded me of the sacrifices we make, and they are worth it, we are family and it showed."

"The Women's Conference was great," said Dominique Carter, a male member of the Local 249 Women's



Participants at the UAW Women's Conference studied union history in order to make some more of their own.

Committee. "I obtained a lot of knowledge and met some very inspirational and influential people. To see and meet people who achieved so much and worked so hard for UAW was very inspirational for me and my journey to

come. I see why Robin goes so hard for our local and the UAW. Thank you for this opportunity, and don't be afraid to be one of the few men on the Women's Committee. It's a different experience, and I'm grateful for it."



When labor and civil rights stood shoulder to shoulder for change

Excerpted from Carter Bohanon's winning essay
in the 2022 Charlie Suffridge Scholarship Contest

By Carter Bohanon

The fight for workers' rights and the fight for racial equality have been one and the same for centuries. You cannot have equality of race without also having equality in the workplace, and unions have been the key in achieving this workplace equality, especially during the Civil Rights Movement. Starting off with the March on Washington, or less commonly known by its full name, "The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom," the key word being jobs. This was not only a march for racial equality, but also for the working class.

The core tenets of the movement included establishing a \$2 minimum wage (equivalent to roughly \$17 in 2021) and expanding the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) to include the majority-Black occupations the act excluded at the time.

The push for these changes meant that all workers would now have the right to a, minimum wage, overtime pay, record keeping, and youth employment standards. The expanded FLSA, along with the push for a raised \$2 minimum wage, meant that the working class would be far better off, with more economic opportunity and power in the workplace. None of this would have been possible without the help of labor unions. According to estimates, the labor movement began to play a larger role in the civil rights movement by mobilizing 40,000 union members for the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

Not only were there thousands of union members at the march, but the

entire operation was also organized by a man named, A. Philip Randolph, a labor leader, who founded the nation's first major Black labor union, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

In nearly every aspect, the March on Washington had direct ties with the labor unions of the time. But the March on Washington was not the only step made by unions towards furthering workers' rights. Another movement was the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM).

In 1968, DRUM called for a shutdown of Chrysler's Dodge Main Plant. More than 3,000 Black workers participated in the strike, keeping it closed for over two days. Workers at the Chrysler plant protested the poor working conditions and lack of economic opportunity they had in their workplace as, black autoworkers were kept in the lowest-paying and most dangerous jobs, were not given opportunities for advancement into management, and were most often

under the supervision of older white males.

While the DRUM movement led to change in the Chrysler plant, its biggest impact was the inspiration it provided for the rest of the nation, eventually sparking various other union movements in the automotive industry and even healthcare industry which all garnered extensive media coverage of the grievances of black workers and increased the number of black leaders at GM and the UAW.

Putting black workers in power killed two birds with one stone, becoming a win not only for workers' rights, but also the Civil Rights Movement.

While workers' rights were important, an even larger issue was occurring throughout America with widespread racism and discrimination. Civil Rights leaders needed all the help they could get, and labor unions did not shy away. Labor unions stood side by side with the Civil Rights Movement for decades, being at the forefront providing support and helping to push legislation for racial equality.

The March on Washington led to the passage of the historic Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination in employment because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. With this, a major step towards reaching complete equality was

achieved and finally cemented in law.

But this was just one of many Civil Rights movements that labor unions were a part of. Another being the remarkable Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-1956 where, according to reports, trade unionists in the North offered substantial financial and logistical support to the boycott.

One of the most direct influences labor unions had on achieving racial equality occurred in 1964 when the AFL-CIO provided critical lobbying support and testimony for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, two laws that led to the filing of thousands of successful cases against workplace discrimination and eliminated many of the racist voting restrictions in the South.

Labor unions truly were significant during the Civil Rights Movement in making change, vastly improving workers' rights and racial equality through their efforts. Without labor unions many major movements would not have been successful, many monumental leaders never would have been inspired, and many historic pieces of legislation would never have passed. Workers have stood side by side for decades, working as one to solve issues like the ones presented in the Civil Rights Movement Solving issues to make a better world for everyone to live in.

Serving members an incredible opportunity

By Jason Starr

Change is a difficult but necessary process for growth and progress. This is as true today as it was when I started my career with UAW Local 249 in 1995 as a 19 year old kid working night shift in the Truck Trim Department. Sometimes it seems like just yesterday that I began this journey in awe of what being a member of this great Union meant. I could have never imagined how the UAW would change my life and that I would one day have the incredible honor and privilege of serving the members as the President of UAW Local 249. It has been a humbling experience and profound opportunity to grow with this local. The relationships and friendships that I have forged over my career as we have taken on the attacks on our Union will last the rest of my days.

Serving this membership has been an incredible opportunity; one I can never thank you all for enough, but a new challenge has been presented to me that will bring change to both Local 249 and me. I have been offered and have accepted a position with the International UAW as a Regional Serving Representative in Region 4, effective next week as I write this. While I am sad about leaving the local that I love so much I am also very excited to begin this new chapter of my service to the UAW. It is my hope that I can bring that Local 249 style to my new role and the locals I will be working with.

Over my two terms serving as President, I have experienced an unparalleled amount of support from the Executive Board, appointed reps, standing committee members, skilled trades and most of all, the members of UAW Local 249. I would be remiss if I also did not give a special thank you to our retirees, you are the engine that

drives everything, and your support has helped this local more than you will ever know.

We have been through so much together and saying thank you for entrusting me to lead this Local is simply inadequate. Serving with such amazing leadership that works tirelessly every day to advance the interests of our members has been such a privilege and I am so thankful for their leadership and dedication to our union and its membership.

With the support of the leadership team and membership, we have been laser focused on membership education and mobilization. We have built an unprecedented education and communication program that will continue to build the strength of our great Local and Union for years to come. We have mobilized our standing committees and have answered the call to activism in our community at a level that I am so very proud of.



Dana Davidson, left to right, Scott Pyle, Dean Freed, Tony Renfro and Jim Fisher present former President Jason Starr with a plaque commemorating his service to Local 249 as he moves into a new role as Region 4 Servicing Rep. Photo by Don Lehman.

The future of the UAW as an institution will require everyone's continued activism and solidarity. I know that our vice president and my friend, Tony Renfro, will keep this local moving forward in the right direction. He will need your support, just as much as I have, if we are to continue to fight against those who seek to destroy our way of life and take the benefits, we hold so paramount. Tony has served this local in many roles, and I have absolutely no doubt in my heart that he will serve

this membership as President at the highest level.

Again, I want to thank the membership of UAW Local 249 for the most profound honor of my career. In my head, I swear I'm still that same 19-year-old kid, but thanks to this local, the support you have all given me, and the opportunities that have come from that support, I feel more prepared to tackle the challenges ahead of me. I know you are in good hands and look forward to what the future brings for Local 249.

Ford-UAW Local 249
HEALTH FAIR
Sept 12 thru Sept 16
9:00 am to 6:00 pm
Ford Motor Assembly Plant
8121 N E 69 Highway Claycomo, MO 64119

Representatives from the healthcare providers will be set up in the tunnel at the Ford Motor Assembly Plant to answer questions with there benefits

For additional information please contact your union benefit Rep. Steve Hibbs, Derron Joyner, Jason Hartman at 816-454-6333

IN MEMORIAM

Ralph Bishop July 18, 2022
Georgia Brown May 2, 2022
Edgar Burlile July 9, 2022
Harley Butcher June 22, 2022
John Chadwick March 26, 2022
Floyd Cordray August 13, 2022
Daniel Cowherd May 5, 2022
Loyd Dickey July 24, 2022
Nathan Goring October 1, 2021
Donald Gorsage July 14, 2022
Matthew Haake July 1, 2021
John Johnson August 1, 2022
Sean Johnson July 21, 2021
Joseph Jones May 22, 2022

James Ketchum June 4, 2022
Jason Morley April 6, 2022
Anachak Pichainarong June 16, 2022
Donald Prichard June 22, 2022
Benito Quiroz May 11, 2022
Laurence Robinson August 10, 2022
Bernie Simmons March 27, 2022
Mitchell Stanfield January 19, 2021
Herman Tankersley July 4, 2022
Lamar Taylor November 8, 2021
Alvin Tyner May 25, 2022
Patrick Welliver October 2, 2021
Lester Yancey May 20, 2022
V. Yoss

*Remembering the Local 249 members
who are no longer with us*

Manpower issues slow production at KCAP

By Jim Fisher

During the month of August at KCAP, members continue to see issues with manpower in the plant. Management has attempted several different tactics to move and hide manpower problems. We have seen them move members affected by down weeks to different shifts for additional support. They have stopped production in Paint and Body shop departments in order to run production in the Final Area. The company has also gone as far as sending members of the Launch Teams and Repair Departments back to the floor for additional manpower. Truck Final posted that any member of the department who wanted to work overtime could just show up in August.

Members have begun to question how manpower got this bad. The company has been more than willing to blame the membership for absenteeism, but the reality is that KCAP's AWOL percentage is one of the lowest in the system.

There were some issues this past month with a couple of weeks seeing an increase in COVID-19 leaves, and the first part of August the weather played a factor with the heat. The obvious answer to manpower is that KCAP has not been successful in hiring new members, but after digging into the statistics, the problem was hidden by their own Labor Relations Department at KCAP.

During the month of August KCAP Labor Relations applied 17 times for a clause in the contract known as "Adverse Impact". This is used when production needs are not met due to an adjustment in manpower. During the winter months you see this during snowstorms where members are not able to make it to work. They are usually 1-day events. KCAP Labor Relations was attempting to prove the point that the plant couldn't maintain production because members were not coming to work.

This action also prevented members who had AWOL'ed on those days from using their contractual rights to convert those AWOL's into Paid Personal Days.

During our investigation into these claims, it was proven that it was in fact Labor Relations not providing accurate information to Labor Affairs about the plant's absenteeism. Labor Relations had not removed members who had quit the company over the past couple of months from their active roster. Because members who quit were still showing on supervisors pay sheets they marked them AWOL. This led to an appearance that the plant had an AWOL problem.

We have seen over the last few months that the Labor Relations office isn't keeping accurate records,

not just of AWOLs, but in areas such as processing classification changes and SUB payments. Their inability to keep accurate records has caused the Labor Affairs Department in Detroit to not have a clear understanding of where our plant stands with manpower. It's also caused delays in members getting accurate pay.

Once the Local Union was able to provide correct documentation to Ford's Labor Affairs Department all "Adverse Impact" requests were denied. It has been proven that the shortage of manpower at KCAP was not caused by absenteeism. These actions by the KCAP Labor Relations Department were either done to cover up the manpower problems or due to the inability to maintain accurate records of the number of employees that work at our plant.

One example of this was brought to light during a down week when they forced 80 members to work support on a different shift. The company went so far to complain to the union about the percentage of those who didn't show up for the new shift. We received the list of members that were marked AWOL and 22 of those "forced to work employees" had not worked at Ford in several weeks.

To work on improving the manpower in the plant an agreement was announced on August 11 that all the 267 TFT members in the plant would also be converting to Full time In-Progression status. In addition to these the next 201 members in orientation would also be a direct hire to full time.

This means that over the next few weeks a total of 467 members will go from TFT status to Full Time In-Progression. While this is very welcome news for our newest members the fact remains, that Ford is in a hiring crisis and additional action needs to be taken. We can go to the obvious answer that the starting wage for attracting new employees is not competitive for the market. It's my belief that this plant has



Local 249 Baraining Chair Jim Fisher answers questions about manpower issues at KCAP during the August membership meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

an amazing opportunity to do great things with Transit and F-150 production over the next several years at KCAP and waiting on Ford to fix the pay rates until next September's contract is only delaying those opportunities for our success.

The production schedules in August also had adjustments. While Truck B and C crews had down weeks due to parts issues, all Repair and Inspection Departments were brought in to help deliver units to our customers and hundreds of members who were scheduled for the layoff were brought in to support other departments who were low on manpower. The Transit

System has completed the build for the 2022 Transit. This also means the Major Model Language in Appendix H of the National Contract has expired and on August 29th the Transit System will return to a 10-hour schedule.

On a final note, Local 249 will see two of our members taking new paths. President Jason Starr has accepted a position with the Regional 4 Staff, and Local 249 Work Standards Representative Todd Wyse will be retiring. I would personally like to thank both of you for your years of hard work and dedication to the members of Local 249 and wish you both the best on your new paths.

A promotional poster for a baseball game between the KC (Kansas City) and Seattle Mariners. The poster features the UAW 249 logo in the top left corner. The main text reads "RECREATION DAY AT THE KC VS SEATTLE MARINERS". Below this, it says "\$10.00 FOR TWO TICKETS SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2022 6:10 PM GATES OPEN AT 4:00 PM". A smaller line of text states "THIS IS AVAILABLE TO THE FIRST 25 MEMBERS! MUST BE 21 OR OLDER!". At the bottom, it says "Must sign up and pay at the Hall by September 16, 2022". The background shows a baseball field with stadium lights.

Local 249 gearing up for the fall

By Tony Renfro

I want to start by thanking Jason Starr for his years of service to the members of Local 249 and to wish him well in his new role as servicing rep. for Region 4 working out of the North Oak Trafficway office. Serving as president of Local 249 is a big responsibility and one that I take very seriously. My promise to you is that I will do my very best to maintain the high standards that members of our union have come to expect.

September is shaping up to be a busy month at Local 249. I hope everyone enjoyed the union picnic on September 5 at LaBenite Riverfront Park in Sugar Creek. It was a great family event – one of the biggest we put on each year – with games, rides and food for everyone.

There will be a Health Fair in the tunnel of the main plant from September 12-16 from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm where members can meet with representatives of health care providers. On September 18 the union Recreation Committee is sponsoring a Cornhole Tournament in the parking lot at the union hall. The Motorcycle Committee is sponsoring a Solidarity Ride leaving the union hall at 10:30 am on September 24. That same day, the Recreation Committee is sponsoring a Recreation Day at the K where members can buy tickets to watch our Kansas City Royals for just \$10. Tickets are on sale at the union hall until September 16.

The Local 249 CAP Committee has already been working to get out the vote for the November 8 Midterm Election. Working people and their unions have been under attack for decades now. Here in Missouri, we have fought off repeated attacks on our wages,

living standards, union rights and health and safety standards brought on by the very politicians who claim to represent us.

Our public schools – so important to the future of our children – have been in decline for many years as politicians shift taxpayer dollars to private schools. A state audit reveals Missouri provided about 32% of state aid to K-12 public schools in 2020 – ranking Missouri 49th in the nation. That means mainly local sources, like property taxes, are picking up the rest of the tab – or cutting some educational programs.

Missouri teachers are paid some of the lowest starting salaries in the nation, according to a review of teacher pay by the National Education Association. As a result, roughly 25% of the state's 550 school districts are implementing a four-day week due to a shortage of teachers this year.

The defunding of public education hits working families like ours the hardest. Working mothers must pick up the tab for childcare when their kids are out of school for the day. Our children, who must compete with children from better off school districts or well-funded private schools for admission to college, trade schools or jobs, are at a huge disadvantage because



Local 249 President Tony Renfro chaired the August membership meeting August 21. Photo by Don Lehman.

their schools shut their doors one day a week while wealthier schools stay open full time.

Many of our members who live in rural areas north of the plant have been hit doubly hard. They are under attack as workers, as residents of small towns and as family farmers. For example, although the Affordable Health Care Act provided funding that would have saved them, seven rural Missouri hospitals have closed since 2014 because the Republican majority in the state legislature refused to approve Medicaid expansion.

Legislation sponsored by the Republican majority in Jefferson City favors corporate farms over family farms. For example, the independent production of hogs in Missouri was once a huge economic driver in our rural communities and economies. But, because of corporate control, in nearly one generation, 90% of Missouri's hog producers were put out of business, from 23,000 in the mid-80's to only 2,600 today.

Every time you are jolted by a pothole – Missouri's roads are among the nation's 10 worst in the nation – you are feeling the effect of two decades of Republican super majorities.

The list could go on and on.

I'm asking our members to get involved. We need you to do three things: First, if you want to stop the down-

ward spiral that has been taking our state down the drain for the past 20 years, please contact the union hall to volunteer to help get out the vote in November. Even if it's just for a few hours on a day you're off work, it's really important and it makes a difference.

Second, if you aren't already registered to vote, you have until October 12. Members can check the status of their registration or submit an online voter registration application by going to sos.mo.gov. You must be 17 ½ years of age to register, 18 years of age to vote, a U.S. citizen and Missouri resident.

Third, we need you to vote on November 8.

There is a new voter ID law in effect designed by Republicans to make it harder for working people like us to vote. When you vote, you will need to show one form of ID to sign the poll book to obtain your ballot: A nonexpired Missouri driver or non-driver license; A nonexpired military ID, including a veteran's ID card; A nonexpired United States passport; or Another photo ID issued by the United States or the state of Missouri which is either not expired or expired after the date of the most recent general election. If you do not possess any of these forms of identification, but are a registered voter, you may still cast a provisional ballot.

ATTENTION RETIREES

The Retiree Meeting scheduled for September 21 at 10:30 am will be held at our new meeting place.

**Pleasant Valley Community Civic Center
6805 Sobbie Road
Pleasant Valley Missouri**

Local 249 takes community seriously

By State Senator Barbara Anne Washington

When the pandemic hit, and businesses were forced to close I looked around my district and saw a lot of folks laid off. Their children wouldn't be attending school and these same working parents couldn't afford daycare and food. So, I began calling companies and organizations to do something about it. With the efforts of a collective community, I started the First Saturday Family Essentials food drive in March 2020. Realizing I would need an army of volunteers to distribute food and household essentials to more than 600 families each month I made a quick call to Shirley Mata, and UAW Local 249 showed up every month in full force.

My partnership with Local 249 didn't end there. These sisters and brothers live by my same mantra "to whom much is given much is required" and I'm in awe of the work they do in our community. In January 2022 members donated more than \$1,000 in items to my canned goods drive. And they have continuously shown up to help other organizations by volunteering to hand out food and items at the countless food drives throughout the city.

For Easter, Local 249 hosted its own Kids Day Out complete with the Easter Bunny. I'm proud to support a group of working men and women who show up and show out whenever called on. And I'm even more proud

that they call on elected officials like myself to help when needed. When Local 31 went on strike in 2019 Local 249 organized elected officials to walk the picket line in protest and join Local 249 in keeping the pantry full at the Fairfax plant.

Organized labor is more than a group of men and women fighting for higher wages and better benefits. Local 249 is a shining example of how organized labor is a crucial entity in Kansas City that identifies emerging issues in our community and puts forth the efforts to solve them. Kansas City and Senate District 9 is better because of the sisters and brothers of Local 249. Thank you for your service.



Missouri State Senator Barbara Anne Washington speaks to striking UAW members at the General Motors Fairfax Assembly Plant in 2019. Photo by Don Lehman. Washington represents District 9

Recreational Marijuana on the Mo. ballot

Capitol Report

Missouri voters this fall will decide whether to legalize recreational marijuana use after Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft on Aug. 9 certified an initiative petition placing the measure on the Nov. 8 statewide ballot. However, a separate initiative seeking to establish a new system for state and congressional elections failed to qualify.

The marijuana measure will appear on the ballot as Amendment 3. In addition to legalizing marijuana use for those age 21 and older, it also would provide for the regulation and licensing of marijuana producers and retailers, authorize the expungement of records of those convicted of certain marijuana offenses and impose a 6-percent tax on marijuana sales.

With 65.6 percent support, Missouri voters amended the state constitution in 2018 to legalize marijuana use for medicinal purposes. Amendment 3 is backed by the same group responsible for the prior amendment and would grant those holding licenses to produce or sell medical marijuana preference in receiving licenses for recreational production and sales.

To qualify for the ballot, an initiative petition proposing a constitutional amendment must have valid signatures from roughly 172,000 registered Missouri voters, as well as hit minimum signature marks in at least six of Missouri's eight congressional districts. Amendment 3 had 214,535 valid signatures and hit the necessary mark in six districts.

Lawsuits challenge constitutionality of new elections law

Voting rights advocates have filed a pair of lawsuits seeking to block key portions of a new law they contend imposes unconstitutional barriers to voting. Both were filed in Cole County Circuit Court on behalf of the Missouri chapters of the League of Women Voters and the NAACP.

The Republican-controlled General Assembly passed the law, House Bill 1878, in May as part of a years-long GOP effort

to restrict voting access. The measure will take effect Aug. 28 and be in force for the Nov. 8 general elections unless blocked by a court.

The first lawsuit, filed Aug. 22, challenges provisions of HB 1878 that substantially restrict voter registration drives by requiring those who assist in registering more than 10 voters to register with the state, require they be Missouri residents and prohibit them from receiving any type of compensation. The suit also challenges a provision that bans encouraging or assisting others to vote via absentee ballot. The lawsuit says those provisions violate free speech rights.

The second case, filed Aug. 23, takes aim at a provision of HB 1878 attempting to require Missourians to have a government-issued photo identification in order to vote. The Missouri Supreme Court has twice struck down previous photo voter ID laws for unconstitutionally interfering with Missourians voting rights.

Advocates seek to block law criminalizing homelessness

A Springfield non-profit that helps secure housing for the homeless sued

the state on Aug. 19 seeking to block a new law that criminalizes sleeping on public property and also requires cities to use state funding for homeless programs for temporary camps instead of permanent housing, among other provisions that have been criticized as counterproductive by those who work with the homeless.

The Republican-controlled General Assembly added the provisions targeting the homeless, including one that paradoxically can strip funding for addressing homelessness from cities with high homelessness rates, to House Bill 1606 earlier this year. Although originally limited to tweaking laws governing county financial statements, the bill later expanded to about 20 different provisions loosely relating to local government.

The lawsuit contends the bill violates constitutional provisions requiring legislation to be limited to a single subject that is clearly reflected in the bill's title and prohibiting bills from being changed from their original purpose.



State Reps Ashley Aune, left to right, Ingrid Burnett, Keri Ingle, Emily Weber, State Sen. Lauren Arthur, State Rep. Maggie Nurrenbern, District 1 state rep. candidate Jessica Piper and State Rep. Ashley Bland Manlove were at Local 249 to speak out for women's reproductive rights August 27. Photo by Don Lehman.

Local 249 sponsors Freedom Festival

By Pat Hayes

When the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* in June, Local 249 Education Committee member Tyler Riley knew he had to do something. "The decision didn't affect me," said Riley, "but sure affects my wife and daughters. I couldn't sit back and do nothing."

What Riley did was convince fellow Education Committee members Jessica Rabeneck, Darren King, Lukas Taylor and Anthony Turner to volunteer to spend a long, hot day setting up and cleaning up after the KC Freedom Fest, a family friendly prochoice event held on the ballfield at Local 249 August 27. Riley's wife, Alyssa, and their daughters Porshia and Daisy also helped with logistics for the event.

The event, a festival for women's reproductive rights, featured education, food, games and fun. It was sponsored by Planned Parenthood, Prochoice Missouri, Midwest Access Coalition, Right by You and Indigenous Women Rising in addition to Local 249.

Featured speakers at the event included State Sen. Lauren Arthur, State Reps Maggie Nurrenbern, Emily Weber, Ashley Bland Manlove, Ashley Aune, Keri Ingle and Ingrid Burnett. Jessica Piper, a candidate for state representative from District 1 in rural Northwest

Missouri also spoke.

Riley's reaction to the Supreme Court's overturn of women's reproductive healthcare rights wasn't an uncommon one. In the wake of the decision thousands of young women across the nation registered to vote for

the first time. Large protest rallies in cities large and small gave voice to the anger in women everywhere over the loss of control over their own bodies. In Kansas, they made their voices heard by defeating a change to the state constitution that would have made abortion illegal by a wide margin.

In Missouri, a trigger law to abolish abortion has caused widespread uncertainty about women's health care in the state. Medical providers are fearful that patients with high-risk

pregnancies will face delayed care in life-threatening situations because doctors fear prosecution under Missouri's abortion ban. The new law makes no exceptions for rape or incest.

Like Tyler Riley, Amanda Stebbin, 34, the chief organizer of KC Freedom Fest, was outraged by the Supreme Court decision and Missouri's assault on her personal freedoms. Married, a mother who works with autistic children, she didn't vote for the first time until she was in her 30s because, she says, she wasn't educated. So, like many others, Stebbin acted. She threw herself into organizing the KC Freedom Fest. "I had to do something to get everyone together," she said, "to educate."

Jessica Piper, a candidate for state representative who describes herself as a dirt road Democrat, has spoken at many prochoice events in rural northwest Missouri says the response to the Supreme Court decision has been more muted in her part of the state. At candidate events, she says, women pull her aside after the meeting to quietly tell her that while they normally vote Republican this time, they plan to vote for her because abortion has been outlawed with no exceptions for rape or incest.



Alyssa, left to right, Daisy, Tyler and Porshia Riley, Darren King, Jessica Rabeneck, Anthony Turner and Lukas Taylor volunteered to help set up for Freedom Fest for women's reproductive rights. Photo by Don Lehman.