

FIRST LOCAL NEWS

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

February 2023

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Jason Culli, from Local 249's Motorcycle Committee, his wife Hazel and son Zachary, took part in Wreaths Across America Dec. 17. National Wreaths Across America Day is a free, non-political event, that honors and remembers our nation's veterans who are laid to rest in 3,700 participating locations nationwide. The event is organized locally by the Local 249's Veteran's Committee. Photo by Don Lehman.

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Local 249's Dave Grant, left, and KCAP's Jason Waggoner, right, present a donation of \$310.00 to Sherri Wallin, a new hire who didn't qualify for Christmas vacation pay to help her out during the Holidays. Photo by Don Lehman.



Local 249's Consumer Affairs Committee teamed up with American Fusion Wheels, one of the UAW community partnerships, in December to do a car show, with all the proceeds going to the Angel Tree Network. All in all, the committee raised over \$1,200.00 to purchase gifts for families in our community.



Gwen Starkey, an award-winning reporter for Local 249's monthly newspaper, First Local News, passed away Jan. 2 from complications of COVID-19. She was 61.

First Local News

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

UAW-Ford Joint Programs

Apprentice Training

Cortez Bradley 816-459-2060

Benefits

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Employee Involvement

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Employee Support Services

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Health and Safety

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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

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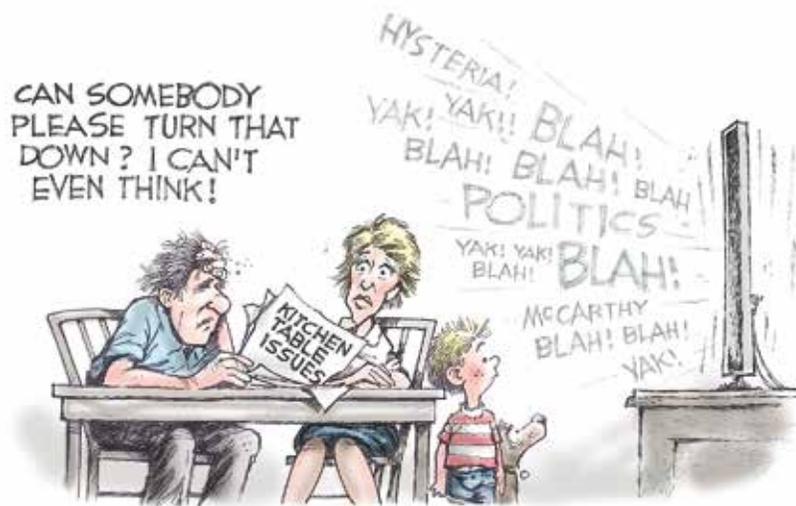
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Missouri State Auditor vows to exceed power by investigating schools

Missouri Legislative Update

Shortly after being sworn in on Jan. 9, new State Auditor Scott Fitzpatrick pledged to exceed the constitutional authority of his office by investigating public school districts for allegedly teaching so-called “critical race theory.” Fitzpatrick, a Republican who had served as state treasurer since 2019, won election as auditor in November.

The Missouri Constitution restricts the state auditor to auditing the finances of state agencies and local governments, including school districts. It also bars the legislature from expanding the auditor’s role, saying: “No duty shall be imposed on him by law which is not related to the supervising and auditing of the receipt and expenditure of public funds.”

Critical race theory is an area of academic study taught in some law schools that examines the lingering impact of racism on institutions. It is not taught in K-12 schools in Missouri. However, conservative Republican politicians often use CRT as shorthand for any instruction or discussion of past or present racism in society. Fitzpatrick made investigating schools on the subject a central theme of his election campaign.

Fitzpatrick replaces Nicole Galloway, who did not seek election to a third term as auditor and was the last remaining Democrat holding statewide office in Missouri. Republicans now control all six statewide executive branch elected offices for the first time since 1932. Democrats had held a majority of those offices as recently as 2016, and last controlled all six in 2000.

Gov. Mike Parson has appointed Republican Vivek Malek, an attorney from Wildwood, to replace Fitzpatrick as state treasurer. Although Malek could have been sworn into office immediately after Fitzpatrick resigned,

he plans to wait until Jan. 17 in order to circumvent a term limitation that would have restricted him to serving a maximum six years in office.

Because of a quirk in how the calendar falls, if Malek had taken office right away, his partial term would have been for a few days more than two years. Since a partial term of more than two years counts as a full term under the Missouri Constitution, he would have been able to seek election to just one full four-year term. By delaying, however, Malek’s partial term will be less than two years and won’t count toward term limits, allowing him to seek two four-year terms and serve up to 10 years total.

In late December, the Missouri treasurer’s office announced that more than 1,000 K-12 students had received scholarships to leave their local public schools through a state-sponsored program.

The MOScholars program leverages tax credits to attract donations that allow students to attend private schools — including ones that are religiously affiliated — and other options such as home schools.

It launched last summer after being approved by the legislature in 2021.

This year, several lawmakers are attempting to expand the program, which could continue to grow even without further action from the legislature.

Labor News From the World Wide Web

The Picket Line

In Missouri: Legislature declares the right to bear arms but not to bare arms

Missouri’s Legislature, which has already extended the heavy hand of the state into women’s medical decisions, is now picking through female legislators’ closets. The Republican House majority on the General Assembly’s opening day last week pushed for a new dress code to require that women wear jackets — sparking a protracted debate about sweaters, sequins and other hot-button issues.

It’s a good thing Missouri isn’t struggling with crumbling infrastructure, underpaid teachers, out-of-control gun violence or other minutiae that might distract these fashion mavens from the urgent topic of blazers versus cardigans.

— *St. Louis Post Dispatch*

Strike talk heating up as Caterpillar and UAW prepare for contract negotiations

The union representing Caterpillar workers is preparing members for a possible strike as contract negotiations are set to begin.

United Auto Workers Local 974 sent a letter to union members indicating talks will start soon, and the union said it has set a strike authorization vote for Jan. 27 in case the company and union bargainers can’t reach a tentative agreement.

The current contract with Caterpillar expires this spring. It follows recent, similar negotiations with John Deere in which the union went on strike, eventually receiving raises and ratification bonuses of several thousand dollars.

UAW Local 974 said in the letter it represents about 3,600 members, compared to 6,200 members in 2005. — *25 News Now*

In a key EV victory, GM battery plant workers vote to unionize with UAW

Workers at a General Motors joint venture battery plant in northeast Ohio overwhelmingly voted in favor of representation with the United Auto Workers, the union said early Friday.

The vote was being closely watched as such battery plants are viewed as crucial for automakers to transition from traditional vehicles with internal combustion engines to all-electric cars and trucks. Several other multi-billion dollar plants from GM and other automakers are under construction in the U.S.

The UAW reports roughly 98% of votes cast were in favor for the union. The count was 710 votes in support of UAW representation; 16 against; and one was void. The National Labor Relations Board, which was overseeing the election, confirmed the results. — *CNN*

Some workers could see as much as 66% raise as UC and UAW reach agreement

The University of California reached an agreement Friday with some 36,000 graduate student teaching assistants and other academic workers for increased pay and benefits that could potentially end a monthlong strike — the largest of its kind in the nation — at the prestigious state system.

The bargaining units said some workers could see raises of up to 66% over the next two years. The contracts would go through May 31, 2025.

“In addition to incredible wage increases, the tentative agreements also include expanded benefits for parent workers, greater rights for international workers, protections against bullying and harassment, improvements to accessibility, workplace protections, and sustainable transit benefits,” Tarini Hardikar, a member of the union bargaining team at UC Berkeley, said. — *CNN*



Local 249 Women's Committee members Dominique Carter, left to right, Robin Taylor, Lena Wiley, NaTisha Johnson, Daniela Garcia-Dunkel, Stielita Locke, Lynn Brown, Raina Lawrence, and Porsche Thomas wrapped up their 2022 community service volunteer work working with Habitat ReStore.

Women's Committee volunteers with Habitat ReStore

By Robin Taylor

On December 7 the Women's Committee participated in their final volunteer event of the year for Habitat ReStore. The committee has worked with Habitat ReStore several times throughout the year. They closed out the year helping Habitat ReStore prepare a large number of discounted items for their end of year sale.

Habitat ReStores are independently owned reuse stores operated by local Habitat for Humanity organizations. ReStores accept donations and sell a constantly changing inventory of diverse, high-quality merchandise to the public at a fraction of the retail price, while diverting reusable household items and building materials from area landfills.

Volunteering with Habitat ReStore was something the Women's Commit-

tee wanted to do to give back to the organization after working with the Habitat Women's Build project.

Women Build events provide the opportunity for women to take a proactive step in serving their communities.

"It was a great experience," Stielita Locke, a new committee member, said.

Daniela Garcia Dunkel added that she "enjoyed volunteering." Until she volunteered, Dunkel said she did not

realize all the things Habitat ReStore does. "It felt so good to give back to our community."

Volunteering our time and talents to the organizations in the community often involves a lot of labor-intensive work.

Porsche Thomas "likes the clear instructions they provide to create a productive day. We work together as Local 249 members in an assembly line set up, and we accomplish in four hours a task that would take them a couple of days to complete."

Habitat ReStore is always happy to see Local 249's Women's Committee. They greatly appreciate all we do to give back to their organization.

That type of gratitude and appreciation makes other committee members,

like Lena Wiley say, "service is what life is about. I'm grateful to have the opportunity to do so with Habitat ReStore."

Natisha Johnson believes "Habitat ReStore is such a valuable resource for the community. Not only do they sell home improvement supplies and furnishings at a discounted price, they also utilize a portion of their proceeds towards helping deserving individuals become homeowners. Knowing I'm able to contribute to those efforts, even in a small way is extremely rewarding."

As the Women's Committee looks forward to volunteering with them in 2023, Lynn Brown "loves being a part of Local 249 and giving back to our community."

Black History Month

GIVE US THE BALLOT

By Martin Luther King

We believe the best way to observe Black History Month and celebrate the Martin Luther King holiday is to recommit ourselves to the ongoing fight for civil rights. Right now, in America, we are now living through a time when white supremacists are once again rearing their heads in legislatures across the country to turn back the clock on voting rights. In this issue of First Local News we are reprinting excerpts from Martin Luther King's May 17, 1957 speech, "Give us the ballot" in the hope it will rekindle the ideal that every America regardless race, color, national origin, sex, and religion has the right to vote.

All types of conniving methods are still being used to prevent Negroes from becoming registered voters. The denial of this sacred right is a tragic betrayal of the highest mandates of our democratic tradition. And so our most urgent request to the president of the United States and every member of Congress is to give us the right to vote.

Give us the ballot, and we will no longer have to worry the federal government about our basic rights.

Give us the ballot, and we will no longer plead to the federal government for passage of an anti-lynching law; we will by the power of our vote write the law on the statute books of the South and bring an end to the dastardly acts of the hooded perpetrators of violence.

Give us the ballot, and we will transform the salient misdeeds of bloodthirsty mobs into the calculated good deeds of orderly citizens.

Give us the ballot, and we will fill our legislative halls with men of goodwill and send to the sacred halls of Congress men who will not sign a "Southern Manifesto" because of their devotion to the manifesto of justice.

Give us the ballot, and we will place judges on the benches of the South who will do justly and love mercy, and we will place at the head of the southern states governors who will, who have felt not only the tang of the human, but the glow of the Divine.

Give us the ballot, and we will quietly and nonviolently, without rancor or bitterness, implement the Supreme Court's decision of May seventeenth, 1954.

In this juncture of our nation's history, there is an urgent need for dedicated and courageous leadership. If we are to solve the problems ahead and make racial justice a reality, this leadership must be fourfold.

First, there is need for strong, aggressive leadership from the federal government. So far, only the judicial

branch of the government has evinced this quality of leadership. If the executive and legislative branches of the government were as concerned about the protection of our citizenship rights as the federal courts have been, then the transition from a segregated to an integrated society would be infinitely smoother. But we so often look to Washington in vain for this concern. In the midst of the tragic breakdown of law and order, the executive branch of the government is all too silent and apathetic. In the midst of the desperate need for civil rights legislation, the legislative branch of the government is all too stagnant and hypocritical.

This dearth of positive leadership from the federal government is not confined to one particular political party. Both political parties have betrayed the cause of justice. The Democrats have betrayed it by capitulating to the prejudices and undemocratic practices of the southern Dixiecrats. The Republicans have betrayed it by capitulating to the blatant hypocrisy of right wing, reactionary northerners. These men so often have a high blood pressure of words and an anemia of deeds.

In the midst of these prevailing conditions, we come to Washington today pleading with the president and members of Congress to provide a strong, moral, and courageous leadership for a situation that cannot permanently be evaded. We come humbly to say to the men in the forefront of our government that the civil rights issue is not an ephemeral, evanescent

domestic issue that can be kicked about by reactionary guardians of the status quo; it is rather an eternal moral issue which may well determine the destiny of our nation in the ideological struggle with communism. The hour is late. The clock of destiny is ticking out. We must act now, before it is too late.

A second area in which there is need for strong leadership is from the white northern liberals. There is a dire need today for a liberalism which is truly liberal. What we are witnessing today in so many northern communities is a sort of quasi-liberalism which is based on the principle of looking sympathetically at all sides. It is a liberalism so bent on seeing all sides, that it fails to become committed to either side. It is a liberalism that is so objectively analytical that it is not subjectively committed. It is a liberalism which is neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm. We call for a liberalism from the North which will be thoroughly committed to the ideal of racial justice and will not be deterred by the propaganda and subtle words of those who say: "Slow up for a while; you're pushing too fast."

A third source that we must look to for strong leadership is from the moderates of the white South. It is unfortunate that at this time the leadership of the white South stems from the close-minded reactionaries. These persons gain prominence and power by the dissemination of false ideas and by deliberately appealing to the deepest hate responses within the human mind. It is my firm belief that this close-minded, reactionary, recalcitrant group constitutes a numerical minority. There are in the white South more open-minded moderates than appears on the surface. These persons are silent today because of fear of social, political and economic reprisals. God grant that the white moderates of the South will rise up courageously, without fear, and take up the leadership in this tense period of transition.

I cannot close without stressing the urgent need for strong, courageous and intelligent leadership from the

Negro community. We need a leadership that is 1957 calm and yet positive. This is no day for the rabble-rouser, whether he be Negro or white. We must realize that we are grappling with the most weighty social problem of this nation, and in grappling with such a complex problem there is no place for misguided emotionalism. We must work passionately and unrelentingly for the goal of freedom, but we must be sure that our hands are clean in the struggle. We must never struggle with falsehood, hate, or malice. We must never become bitter. I know how we feel sometime. There is the danger that those of us who have been forced so long to stand amid the tragic midnight of oppression—those of us who have been trampled over, those of us who have been kicked about—there is the danger that we will become bitter. But if we will become bitter and indulge in hate campaigns, the old, the new order which is emerging will be nothing but a duplication of the old order.

We must meet hate with love. We must meet physical force with soul force. There is still a voice crying out through the vista of time, saying: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you." Then, and only then, can you matriculate into the university of eternal life. That same voice cries out in terms lifted to cosmic proportions: "He who lives by the sword will perish by the sword." And history is replete with the bleached bones of nations that failed to follow this command. We must follow nonviolence and love.

Now, I'm not talking about a sentimental, shallow kind of love. I'm not talking about eros, which is a sort of aesthetic, romantic love. I'm not even talking about philia, which is a sort of intimate affection between personal friends. But I'm talking about agape. I'm talking about the love of God in the hearts of men. I'm talking about a type of love which will cause you to love the person who does the evil deed while hating the deed that the person does. We've got to love.



Local 249 members Zachary Pridgen, left to right, David Cox, Tracie Chrisman, Nathan Chrisman, Daphne Beebe, Courtney Anchors, Jay Bosler and Jim Eckart participated in a wreath laying ceremony at Terrace Park Cemetery in Kansas City Dec. 16 as part of the Wreaths Across America observance. Photo by Don Lehman.

Wreaths Across America honors veterans

By Erica Eckart

Every year, members from Local 249 are honored to participate in the Wreaths Across America ceremonies. This year the Motorcycle Committee, along with the Veterans Committee, donated 5,000 dollars for wreaths to be placed at Terrace Park, a national Wreaths Across America cemetery where many veterans were laid to rest.

"The Motorcycle Committee has been doing this for five years and the Veterans committee for three years now," said Josh Curtis, Chairman of the Motorcycle Committee. "Several UAW members and volunteers show up on these bitter cold days to participate in the ceremony and then proudly place wreaths on the graves of our fallen soldiers."

One of the volunteers, Jim Eckart, husband of Erica Eckart, Chairperson of the Member to Member Committee, had this to say about his first experience: "This has to be one of the most honorable and memorable events that I have had the opportunity to participate in, it is one thing to hear about these types of events, but participating brings a whole other level of gratitude for the amazing things that Local 249 does for our community. It was bitterly

cold, and everyone was so happy to be there, and I was honored to be a part of it and look forward to next year."

Here's a little backstory to how Wreaths Across America got started: Morrill Worcester, owner of Worcester wreath company of Harrington, Maine, was a 12-year-old paper boy for the Bangor Daily News when he won a trip to Washington D.C. His first trip to our nation's capital was one he would never forget. While there he visited the Arlington National Cemetery which was formally established on June 15, 1864, which now is a sprawling 639 Acres and the resting place of over 400,000 fallen soldiers including the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The experience made an impression on young Morrill and followed him throughout his life and successful career, reminding him that his good

fortune was due, in large part, to the values of this nation and the Veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice for their Country. Fast forward to 1992, Worcester wreaths found themselves with a surplus of wreaths nearing the end of the holiday season. Remembering his boyhood experience at Arlington, Morrill Worcester realized he had an opportunity to honor our country's veterans. With the aid of a Maine senator, arrangements were made for wreaths to be placed in one of the older sections of the cemetery.

This ultimately grew into a non-profit organization called Wreaths Across America that has continued to expand all over the country.

"This year's event was a little more special for us at Local 249," said David Cox, recording secretary of the Veterans Committee and Region 4 Veterans Missouri State Chair. "One of our own Local 249 members, Courtney Anchors, was there to help honor her father and grandfather who were both laid to rest in that very cemetery. I was fortunate enough to have the honor of passing the wreaths to Courtney to place on

each one of their graves. We gave each one a moment of silence and a salute to honor them and all they have done. It was very emotional and humbling to be a part of that."

"This was my third year participating in this event with the Motorcycle and Veterans Committees," said Jay Bosler, Chairman of the Cap Committee and Local 249's Sergeant at Arms. "All of the volunteers for the event laid out 1,500 wreaths for these American heroes. I think I can speak for Local 249 volunteers and say it was our honor and privilege to be a part of this awesome celebration!"

Local 249's Motorcycle and Veterans committees as well as the volunteers, take pride in honoring our fallen soldiers every year with a goal to ultimately increase the wreaths we can place every year. For more information on how you can participate, reach out to the committees, or contact the hall to sign up. If you would like to learn more about the history of this event, visit Wreathscrossamerica.org. Special thanks to everyone that helps to make this event a success.



Local 249 elf Porsche Thomas, left to right, Santa, played by Don Picard, Mrs. Claus, Local 249 Secretary, and Layianna Davis hosted Breakfast with Santa Dec. 17 at the union hall. The annual event is sponsored by the Women's Committee. Photo by Don Lehman.

Kids meet Santa at Local 249

By Cecelia Davis

Wintertime is such an exciting time of the year. There are so many fun activities for families to do. One event that is always a guarantee for fun is at our very own Local 249 Breakfast with Santa. It is an event where our union's Women's Committee makes delicious breakfast treats while Santa and his friends greet you with open arms.

Kids' laughter guided you in the right direction as you entered the union hall. The ladies from the Women's Committee presented you with goodie bags the shape of Christmas stockings that consist of candy, popcorn, coloring books, fidget toys and other variety of small toys for the kids to tinker with.

Once kids entered the Whoville-themed party, there were options for different breakfast selections. They offered fluffy pancakes, sausage, and bacon submerged in maple syrup. Then there was an option for creating your own parfait at the yogurt bar with a variety of fruit.

After filling your belly up with the most delightful food, Santa, Mrs. Claus and their elves were waiting to hear

how great the children have behaved all year. Families could come take a snapshot with Santa and his crew. After waiting in line to see the jolly man and his friends, you had the chance to vote on who had created the best gingerbread man out of the twelve active standing committees.

Although every committee had created such fantastic masterpieces, the first place went to the Women's committee, the second went to the Member to Member Committee and last place went to the Chaplaincy Committee. There was also a silent auction with various items for anyone and everyone.

The fun did not stop there. There were arts and craft stations where the children had the option to make an

ornament, a picture frame and some reindeer treats to guide Santa and his reindeers to your house on Christmas eve. If these activities tired you out but you didn't want to leave the party, the women's committee provided a special section where you could kick back and watch a Christmas themed-movie while you indulge the gourmet multi-flavor popcorn you received when you entered the door.

The time had come when Santa, Mrs. Claus and their elves had to go back to the workshop, but the fun did not have to stop, for the Women's Committee had planned to change the event to Whoville. They welcomed you to stay, but they geared this time of the event towards the older kids.

"This was the best," said nine-year-old Jakobe Christensen, who accompanied his retired grandfather Gary Davis. "My favorite part was making the ornaments and seeing Santa again. Oh, and the sweet bacon. It was yummy." Sounds like the Women's Committee has fulfilled the interest of

their targeted audience.

"Breakfast with Santa has been going on successfully for quite a few years for our union families," said Robin Taylor, chairperson of the Women's Committee.

"This year we incorporated games with Santa after breakfast as opposed to the craft fair that we had earlier. That gave children above the age of six something to do other than just sit with Santa. That gives them the opportunity to chat, win some prizes and play some different games that are age appropriate for them and to also have some interaction with their family," she said.

Breakfast with Santa was open to every age bracket. There were about roughly 75 to 115 people who filtered in and out of the event.

The breakfast with Santa and Whoville event by the Women's Committee was phenomenal. This is an annual event you don't want to miss next year. It only gets bigger and better. Thank you Local 249 for hosting this event.

Local 249 retirees honor Martin Luther King

By Natalie Wood

The retirees welcomed the new year by honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. birthday. Hoping all had a safe and Happy New Year.

We were so happy to see so many come out on a cold and rainy day. There were 73 members and guests at our January meeting. With all the changes in our healthcare, we had a guest from Blue Cross and Blue Shield. Lamont Corbin was there to answer any questions about BC/BS and to make sure we knew our new insurance cards were mailed out in December. If you had not received your insurance card, he was there to take your information back to headquarters and start the process to get your card.

Mel Thompson, our retiree chairman, spoke on the OTC medical supplies that we are all due. He stressed that we should open all UAW Trust mail. Both husband and wife are entitled to 150.00 each to spend on medical supplies. A catalog is being mailed to your homes. It is our responsibility to have a current address on file. However, if you have not received your catalog by the end of February call the number on the back of your 2022 insurance card for help.

We celebrate birthdays and anniversary each month. We sang happy birthday to 6 people and two anni-

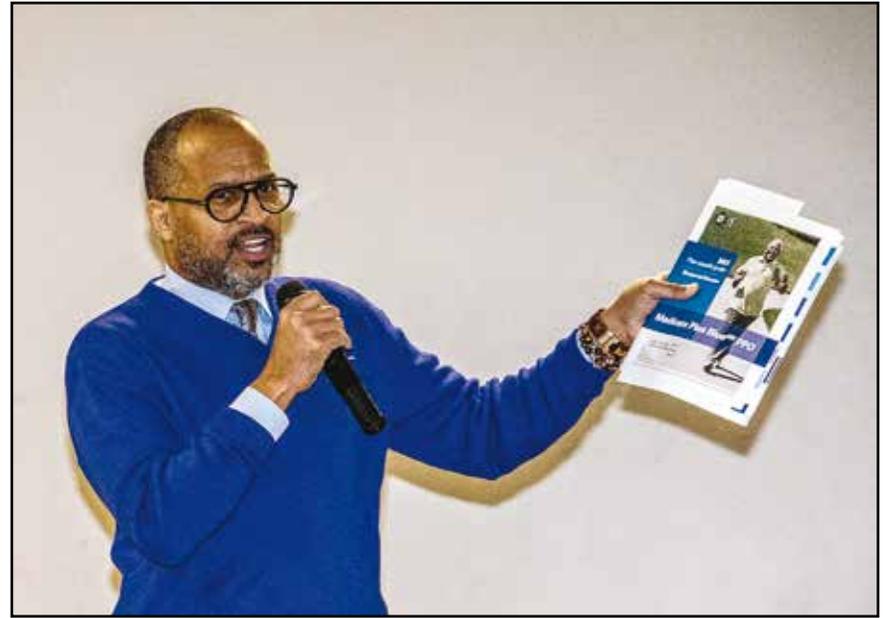
versaries. Harvey and Sue Bullenger celebrated 71 years of marriage, Glen and Mary Sanders celebrated 57 years of marriage. The Bullengers won the anniversary gift.

Food was catered in from Grandma's Catering Service. We had cold sandwiches, chips, coleslaw, pasta salad, donuts and coffee and bottled water to drink.

The Motorcycle Committee representative Josh Curtis announced that they are giving out roses and chocolate to all widows. Be sure to give your name and number to receive this gift. They will do this around Valentine's Day.

Bill Parker and Susan Pena read the names of the members that have passed on. Please keep these families in your prayers. The members are Clyde Hill, Gerald Horst, Herman Kamrowski, Wendy Levy, Richard Mabel, Barbara Tidwell and Zachary Williams.

You should receive a ballot in the mail for the run-off election for UAW International President and International Vice-President soon. The candidates in the run-off for International President are Ray Curry and Shawn Fain. The candidates in the run-off for International



Blue Cross/Blue Shield representative Lamont Corbin updated retirees on 2023 changes to retiree health care at the January retiree meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

Vice-President are Chuck Browning and Tim Bressler. For your vote to be counted, it must be returned before February 28. Please fill out ballots and mail them back by February 17 so it arrives before the February 28 deadline. Postage is paid so just drop it in mailbox.

We have our retirees' meetings to gather information, fellowship and enjoy a good lunch. Come on out to

ogeur next retiree meeting on February 15, starting at 10:30. Raffle tickets will stop being issued at 10:45. Make sure you check the weather before coming out. We may cancel if the weather is too bad for traveling. Generally, if schools are closing due to bad weather, we will not be meeting. So come on out and enjoy the fun. Hope to see you there.

Local 249 supports Kaye's Corner annual toy drive

By Robin Taylor

On December 17, Kaye's Learning Corner held their annual toy drive to help low income families provide Christmas gifts for their children. This event was held at the Kansas City Missouri East Patrol Campus, 2640 Prospect Ave.

Kaye's Learning Corner is an inner-city childcare center. They provide a safe space for children in low-income families to learn and grow. The owner Crystal Turner has a degree in Elementary Education and a master's in special education. Crystal saw a need for affordable childcare in the inner city. She paired that with her background in education and opened a learning center offering affordable childcare with individual and family rates. Kaye's offers a variety of learning experiences, before & after school care, and a second language of French is taught as well.

The Women's Committee volunteers with Kaye's throughout the year. Volunteering time for debris removal behind the center, touch up painting, participating in their Easter egg hunt,

and back to school events. Last year the Women's Committee donated toys and bicycles for the toy drive.

This year, Crystal contacted the Women's Committee, asking if they were able to donate and participate again. Crystal said, "the need for bicycles are great, can Local 249 donate 25 bicycles?"

The Women's Committee asked the President, Executive Board, and all the standing committees if they could donate at least two bicycles per committee for this event. Being the compassionate, dedicated members of Local 249 willing to support an organization in our community, and a great cause, they gladly answered the call.

Local 249 donated 32 bikes, ranging from toddler bikes to beach cruisers. Committee Chairpersons Josh



Curtis, Darrell Stewart, and Jay Bosler went above and beyond to make sure little girls and boys were going to get a bicycle for Christmas.

On the day of the deadline, we were a few bikes short. That day Curtis and the Motorcycle Committee, along with Stewart and the Chaplaincy Committee purchased more bicycles to make sure we met and exceeded our goal.

Bosler offered his truck to transport the bicycles from the Union Hall to the daycare and Police Station. After the annual Breakfast with Santa event hosted at the Union Hall. Women's Committee Chairperson Robin Taylor

and member Kaylee Nowland attend the event. Nowland was dressed in a Grinch costume that tied into their toy drive team.

Nowland and Taylor participated in assisting the parents with shopping for toys and choosing a bicycle. It was an honor and privilege to put a smile on all the kids faces for Christmas. Thank you to all Local 249 standing committees, and volunteers for your participation in this event. We are truly proud of our Local 249 president, executive board, committee's and members of who displayed the true spirit of Christmas.

UAW International Executive Board election

By Jim Fisher

We have said for a while that 2023 would be a busy year, and already some significant events are taking place. First off, we need to remind all members, both active and retired that the run-off elections for the positions of International President, and one position for International Vice President are currently taking place. Ballots began being mailed out on January 12. The recommended date to have your ballot place back in the mail is no later than February 17. The deadline for ballots to be received by the U.S. Post office in Dayton, Ohio is February 28. On March 1, the vote count commences. If you have not received a ballot by mail, you can request one online at www.uawvote.com or call (855) 433-8683. We ask that all Local 249 members take part in the voting process.

In the January Union Meeting Local 249 presented 169 proposals for the upcoming National Contract. Those proposals were accepted by the membership, and have been sent to National Negotiating Team, we would like to thank the members who submitted proposals.

The company has now stated that April 3, will be the date they intend to launch the Transit C-Crew. As you can imagine this has caused a lot of movement in the plant's manpower. KCAP is continuing to do direct hiring for new Local 249 members and will continue the hiring process to fill the newly created jobs in preparation for the start of

C-Crew. We recommend that members watch the job postings as several classifications are still needing to be filled from the bid process. In addition, the company will be surveying current Transit members to see if they would like to shift bump to the C-Crew when it begins.

On January 17, the company notified Local 249 of their intentions to move most of our skilled trades members to the Modified Four Crew Alternative Work Schedule. This schedule can be found in Volume 1 of the International Agreement on pages 356-360. The company states they plan on changing to this schedule in late March. We will provide more informa-



Local 249 Bargaining Chair Jim Fisher announced that Ford has scheduled the launch of Transit C-Crew for April 3. Photo by Don Lehman.

tion as it becomes available.

Already in January we have seen a couple of scheduling adjustments with cancelled Super Production and shifts either running short or cancelled due to the lack of parts. While both products remain in high demand, the

company still sees supply chain issues continuing most, if not all this year. Some of these decisions are made by the company at the last minute, but we will get information out as soon as we have been officially notified by the company.



2023 Charlie Suffridge Scholarship Contest

For High School Juniors & Seniors

Sign Up Now! Deadline for registration is 5:00 PM, Friday, March 17, 2023

1st Place – \$5,000 • 2nd Place – \$2,500 • 3rd Place – \$1,500 • 4th Place – \$1,000

Contestant must:

- Be a junior or senior in high school during the 2022 - 2023 school year.
- Be planning to attend a college, university, or trade school the following school year after graduation.
- Be a dependent of a member in good standing of Local Union 249.
- NOT be a winner of last year's contest.
- Contestant must turn in essay no later than 5:00 p.m., Friday, April 28, 2023.
- Contestant must not use their name on the paper, but they must use their assigned code number. Name use will disqualify the contestant.
- Essay's must be between 800-1200 words.

Registration forms and essay topics will be available at the Union Hall Monday through Friday, until March 17, 2023 8:00 am until 5:00 pm.

Local 249 planning member events for 2023

By Tony Renfro

In December we reviewed the numerous activities the local hosted and participated in and all the work our active standing committees put into making those events successful. After a short time off for the holidays to recharge our batteries and spend time with our families, we are back at it again.

The month of January we already kicked off with a brand-new batch of Martin Luther King Jr. t-shirts and hoodies, featuring the words "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of convenience and comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." With all the obstacles and challenges ahead of us this year, I can't think of a better message to focus upon.

With all the hard work ahead of us, we also need to make sure to maintain a healthy balance of fun as well. There is a paint and sip event being held at the union hall on January 28 where participants will learn how to paint a blossoming cherry tree in front of a mountain. For some sweet treats and gifts for your sweethearts the Consumer Affairs Committee will be hosting a bake sale and silent auction February 13-14. The Motorcycle Committee will be participating in their annual Roses for Widows event, where they deliver a

card, candy and rose to widows in our local communities on Feb 10.

Sign-ups for the chili cookoff event have begun. The event will take place at 9am on March 5 with a \$500 prize for winning first place giving you plenty of time to perfect your winning recipes. Immediately following the chili cookoff will be a Cornhole tournament starting at 10:30. Get those registrations in for a fun-filled day at the hall.

It is no secret that one of my passions is the education and enrichment of our kids. One of the best programs we offer to members for their children is this scholarship competition. We award a first, second and third place winner each year to those who show a clear and unique understanding of the impact of unions in today's society. The sign-ups for the Charlie Suffridge Scholarship Contest have begun, and the deadline to enter is 5:00 pm on Friday, March 17th. There are two writing prompts to choose from and you must sign-up



Local 249 President Tony Renfro announced the union's standing committees were planning a number of great member events for 2023 at the January membership meeting. Photo by Don Lehman.

to receive the code you will use when submitting your entry. This is one way we invest in the future of our families and our union, so take advantage of this opportunity for your family.

Please take the time to attend and support these events. Now more than ever we need to strengthen our rela-

tionships with each other as brothers and sisters in this union. Let's build the bonds now that will take us through the tests to come.

If you haven't done so yet please follow us on social media (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) and sign up for the app.

UAW Local 249 Fishing Tournament Calendar

April 23, 7:00am-3:00pm

Bass Tournament — Stockton Lake Stockton Park – RB Boat Ramp

May 21, 6:00am-3:00pm

4th Annual Kendal Bailey Crappie Tournament — Truman Lake Weigh in at Long Shoal Ramp

June 4, 5:30am-2:00pm

Bass Tournament — Truman Lake Long Shoal Ramp

July 16, 5:45am-2:00pm

9th Annual Wayne Pace Memorial Bass Tournament — Smithville Lake Crows Creek

Sept. 24, 7:00am-3:00pm

Bass Tournament — Lake of the Ozarks Drake Harbor

October 15, 7:00am-3:00pm

Fall Brawl Bass Tournament — Smithville Lake Crows Creek



Workers can and should influence legislation

Mo. State Rep. Aaron Crossley

Workers showed up in force this past November, both at the ballot box and at countless doors, to help elect pro-worker candidates. With a busy election season behind us, it's important to stay engaged and continue the work by holding our elected officials accountable to their promises made to workers. Every session of the Missouri General Assembly sees bills that would either protect or endanger workers' rights. This year isn't any different. While many have been filed, I'm personally keeping my eye on a few bills that impact workers, I will continue to do so as they work their way through the legislative process.

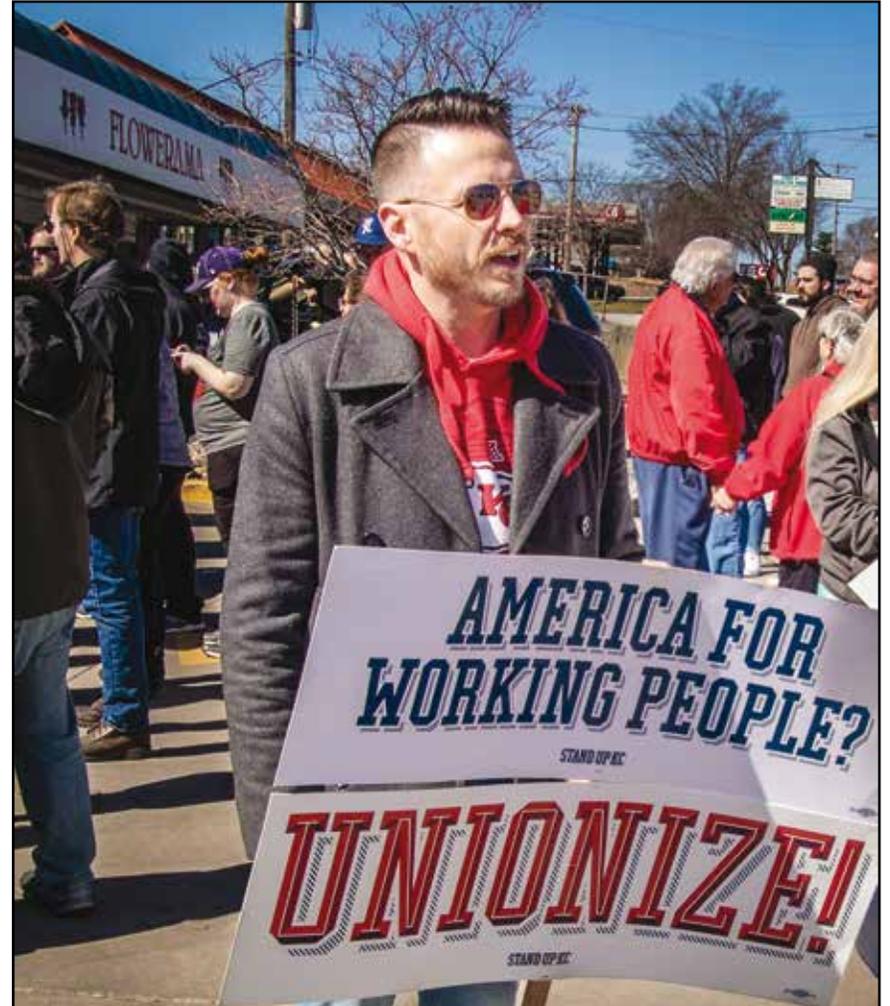
Several bills have been filed that would address workers' compensation. For example, a few pieces of legislation would expand the rights of first responders in filing workers' compensation claims. Rep. Robert Sauls (Independence-D) has filed House Bill (HB) 568 lengthens the list of ailments covered in first responders' claims to include cardiovascular disease, various infectious diseases, psychological disorders, and more. Rep. Brian Seitz (Branson-R) has introduced legislation that would make Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) an occupational disease for first responders (HB 164); I have filed a similar but more detailed bill. My bill – HB 223 – would ensure the cumulative trauma encountered over the course of one's career would constitute a compensable claim and would classify emergency telecommunicators, emergency medical technicians (EMTs), and paramedics as first responders in statute. While these particular bills only pertain to first responders, rising tides lift all boats, as the saying attributed to John F. Kennedy goes. As a social worker who works in a community behavioral health center outside of session, my hope is to start a conversation about the need for addressing the mental health needs of all workers through my and other bills such as these.

In 2022, Rep. J. Eggleston (Maysville-R) sponsored a bill to shorten the amount of time available to workers receive unemployment benefits; while his bill passed the House, it didn't pass the Senate, and Eggleston lost his bid for reelection in November. In response to last year's activities, Rep. Emily Weber (Kansas City-D) has offered HB 215, which would extend the duration a worker can receive unemployment benefits from the current 20 to the new 26 times the weekly benefit amount. Additional unemployment related laws currently in the hopper include Rep. Deb Lavender's (Manchester-D) HB 573 and Rep. Doug Clemens (St. Ann-D) HB 597, which would prohibit the state from taking

back employment security benefits that were dispersed incorrectly under certain circumstances, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many workers struggled to put food on the table. With ongoing global inflation, this seems to be a reasonable accommodation for working families.

HB 673 would create the Missouri Earned Family and Medical Leave Act as offered by Rep. Bridget Walsh Moore (St. Louis-D). As Walsh Moore stated in a recent press release, "Parents from developed countries around the world get to bond with their new child: why do Missourians deserve any less?" The Act would ensure workers were granted up to six weeks of paid leave upon the birth of their child.

There are many more pieces of legislation currently on the table that impact workers, and as mentioned previously, I will continue to monitor all of them as this legislative session rolls on. If any of the abovementioned pieces of legislation are important to you, reach out to your representative to let them know (you can find your legislators at house.



Missouri State Rep. joined striking Starbucks workers and UAW supporters on the picket line a year ago. Photo by Don Lehman.

mo.gov). Those of us who have the honor of serving you in Jefferson City work for you, so let us know when we are or aren't

doing the work you would have us to do. That's what representative government is all about.

AFL-CIO: U.S. Supreme Court must uphold right to strike

AFL-CIO

"The right to strike is on trial [Jan. 10] at the U.S. Supreme Court. For nearly a century, federal law has protected workers' right to strike in order to improve their wages, hours and working conditions. Glacier Northwest is actively seeking to undermine this fundamental right, arguing that it is entitled to sue the union in state court and seek monetary damages for undelivered concrete product as the result of truck drivers striking for fair wages and better working conditions. Glacier's argument flies in the face of long-standing precedent and is a direct attack on the right to strike, a pillar of any democracy.

"The Washington Supreme Court correctly held that the National Labor Relations Board should determine whether the strike was protected, not the state courts. It is crucial to the livelihoods of America's workers that the U.S. Supreme Court affirm the lower court's decision."

Teamsters General President Sean M. O'Brien released the following state-

ment today on the case:

"Workers in America have the fundamental right to strike, and American workers have died on picket lines to protect it. The ability to withhold your labor is the one powerful tool throughout the history of unionization that has ensured workers can improve their working conditions.

"This right is now on trial at the

Supreme Court. The anti-worker case before the Court is undemocratic and disregards long-standing legal precedent. It is about corporations using the legal system to try to deny workers their inherent power. Regardless of the outcome, Corporate America will fail in such pursuits because American workers will never be broken.

For both the American worker and our entire country, the Supreme Court must affirm the lower court's ruling that the legality of the strike falls exclusively within the jurisdiction of the National Labor Relations Board.

"The right of workers to strike must be preserved and protected."

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler released the above statement Jan. 10 on the case.



Santa delivers a present to a member of the TNC Community as Kelly McGillis, TNC's chief executive officer looks on. The annual Santa Ride event, sponsored by Local 249's Motorcycle Committee, provided gifts and fun to more than 50 developmentally disabled people in the area. Photo by Don Lehman.

Local 249 brings Santa to developmentally disabled

By Pat Hayes

Rudolph was still vacationing in Florida and the sleigh was in the shop being readied for Christmas deliveries. So, with characteristic ingenuity, Local 249's Motorcycle Committee – with help from the elves in the other union standing committees – brought Santa and Mrs. Claus to meet developmentally disabled residents of the Harry S. Truman Neurological Center at the union hall Dec. 8 in a 770 Horsepower Kansas City built Shelby Ford 150.

"You ought to see the joy it brings to their faces. It's something amazing," said Motorcycle Committee Chair Josh Curtis.

The Harry S. Truman Children's Neurological Center was founded in 1949 as the Cerebral Palsy Foundation is now known as the TNC Community. The nonprofit provides support and care for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities across Missouri. The group advocates for interdependent living, education, and community inclusion for individuals with developmental disabilities.

"The Christmas party you hosted for the individuals we support at TNC Community was absolutely fantastic," wrote Kelly McGillis, TNC's Chief Ex-

ecutive Officer in a note to Curtis. "The preparation and effort that went into the celebration really showed."

The union hall atrium was deco-

rated with multiple Christmas trees and the railings were festooned with garlands as TNC residents met Santa and Mrs. Claus, opened presents delivered by Santa's elves and sang Christmas carols to celebrate the holiday. More than 50 residents from the TNC Community received holiday gifts.

"I was moved by the incredible joy you brought to everyone – from the visit by Santa and singing of carols together, to the personalized gifts and the way volunteers took time to

talk to individuals and make them feel special," added McGillis.

"The holidays and celebrations like this mean so much to the people that we support. Many of them have no family. They wouldn't know what it's like to have people that love and care about them," said McGillis.

"It's all about making their day special because a lot of them have fallen through the cracks. A lot of people don't come visit them, so we want them to feel special," Curtis said.



Local 249's standing committees pitched in to make the Motorcycle Committee's Santa Ride a big success. Photo by Don Lehman.