

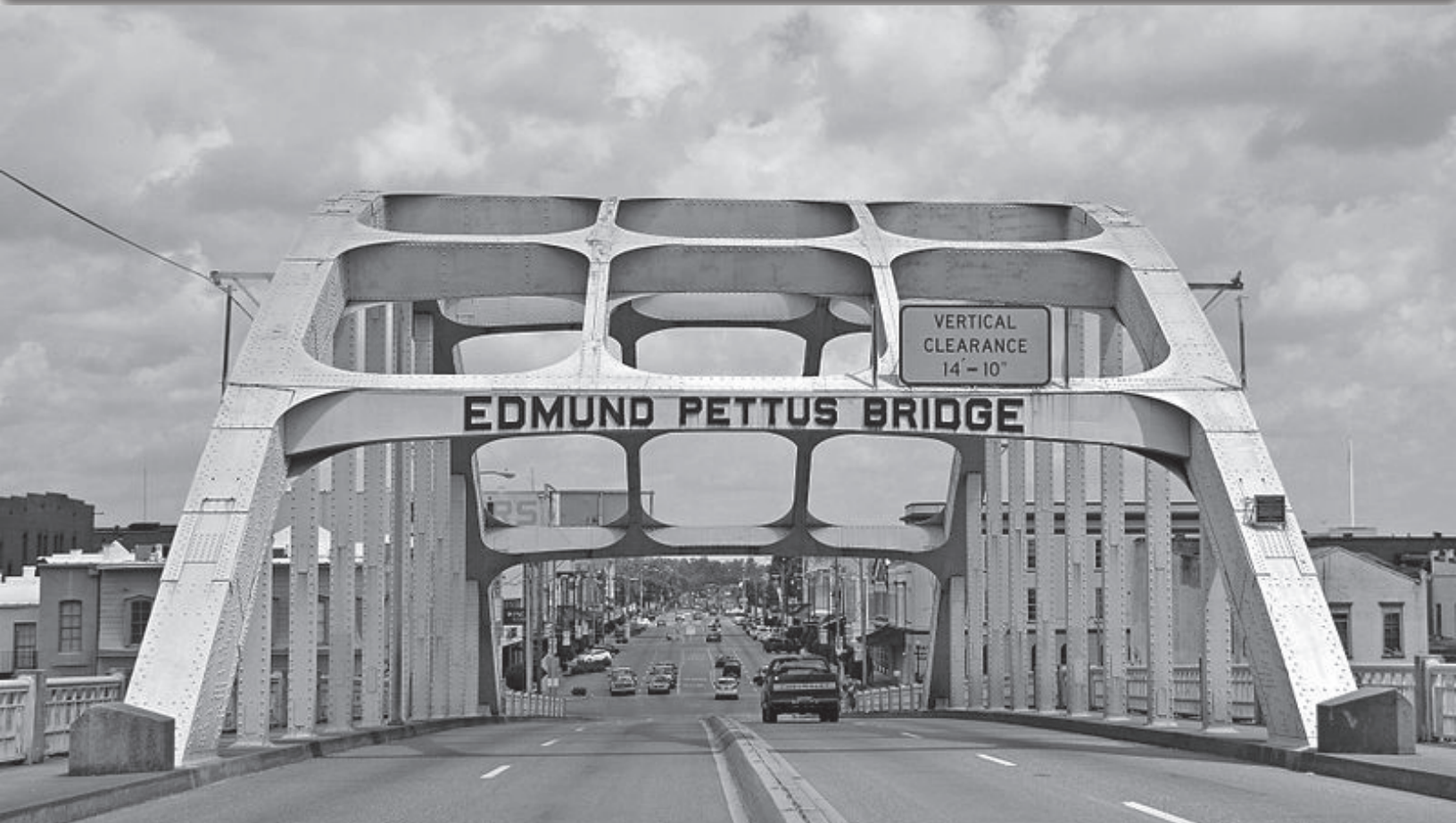


Local Voices

UAW Local 2209

Chartered 1985

JAN-FEB 2021



See page 10 for Edmund Pettus Bridge and Walk to Freedom

Local Voices

UAW Local 2209

Chartered 1985



UAW Local 2209 Executive Board

Officers

President	Holli Murphy
Vice President	Jim Peters
Recording Secretary	Amy Houston
Financial Secretary-Treasurer	Shane B. Davis
Trustee	David Bartkowiak
Trustee	Melinda Ladd
Trustee	Amanda Meier
Sergeant-At-Arms	Manuel Anzaldua
Guide	Jamie Teller

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Unit 2 Chair (Nurses)	Mike McClain
Unit 3 Chair (Caravan)	Robert Lewis
Unit 4 Chair (Avancez Tire & Wheel)	DaVontae Williams
Unit 5 Chair (Avancez Maintenance Techs)	Johnathan Minard
Unit 6 Chair (Ruan Trucking)	Vacant
Unit 7 Chair (Avancez VAA)	Angela Vaughn
Unit 1 Zone Shift 1	Dave Poor
Unit 1 Zone Shift 2	Steve Turner
Unit 1 Zone Shift 3	Christopher Phillips

Retiree Member at Large

Retiree Chapter Chair	Diana Bovie-Koomler
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 Copy Editors & Feature Editors
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 Kevin Murray • Roxanna Murray • Denzel Wallace
 Photographer • Linda Riedel Ellis

Editorial Policy

The views or opinions expressed by the individual writers are not necessarily those of the editor, nor the administration of Local 2209. The editorial decisions to publish or edit content are made at the discretion of the editors and are based on factors including but not limited to: relevance, interest to the readers, timeliness, as well as space limitations within the publication.

* Photos in the Local Voices may be photoshopped or cropped for better presentation.

Deadline for articles is the Friday before the 3rd Saturday in odd months. Publications will be in even months.

Address Change

To ensure delivery of the Local Voices it is important to keep your address updated. Please stop by or call the Union Hall whenever you have a change of address.

Local Voices Deadline

Friday, March 19, 2021

To submit articles
 email: localvoices2209@gmail.com
 or drop it off at the Union Hall



UAW Local 2209 Publication

PO Box 579 • Roanoke IN • 46783

Union Hall

Phone: 260-672-2209 Fax: 260-672-9220
 Email: uaw2209@frontier.com
 Hours: Monday - Friday 6:30 am - 3:30 pm

GM Union Work Center

Unit 1 Shop Chair	260-673-2838	
GA	260-673-2538	260-673-2197
Body & Paint	260-673-2975	

GM UAW Benefit Office

260-673-2339	260-673-2540	260-673-2596
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GM Benefits & Services

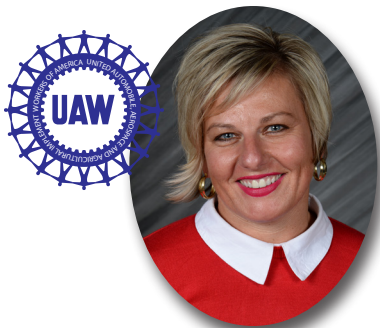
GM Benefits & Services	800-489-4646
GM UAW Legal Services	800-482-7700
Vehicle Purchase Plan	800-235-4646

Membership Meetings

Cancelled until further notice.

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Holli Murphy

President

Hello Brothers and Sisters!

Although we're still dealing with COVID-19, we have been able to do many things at the union hall while maintaining social distancing. Our education committee just completed training through UAW Region 2B and finished up the online academy. They are currently working on their curriculum to teach the membership and will be starting with the Standing Committees first. Our CAP committee has been working hard at finding

ways to build up the V-CAP program and educate the membership on issues that our members can relate to without overwhelming them with political parties.

I have met with a couple Standing Committees to complete committee elections and formulate plans for the year and still have a few more to meet with. The next issue I will provide all the members who were elected. I appreciate seeing all the members wanting to get involved, I have seen lots of new faces!

I am so excited to announce Local 2209 has joined forces with 'United Front', an initiative from Fort Wayne UNITED. In the country's current climate of racial tension and civil unrest, Fort Wayne UNITED is again well positioned to provide support through the creation of a comprehensive program for cultural competency training, racial healing, and unity. The goal of the United Front Initiative is to bring the community of Fort Wayne

together to attain racial healing, equity, education, and organizational transformation by various topics related to diversity and inclusion. Educational sessions will be offered to Fort Wayne organizations and businesses in order to empower them with the ability to value diversity, assess their environments, and implement interventions that will enhance their inclusive cultures, motivating people to work together toward community shared goals.

UAW Benefits Union Hall Office Hours

A UAW Benefit Representative is at the Union Hall every Wednesday from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. Except during Holidays, vacation, and training.

It is suggested to call the Union Hall at 260-672-2209 to confirm a Benefit Rep will be available. When you arrive, please check in with office secretary, Erika.

There is no greater calling than to serve your fellow man. There is no greater contribution than to help the weak. There is no greater satisfaction than to have done it well. • Walter Reuther



Jim Peters

Vice President

Hello Everyone! Welcome to 2021!

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday and enjoyed their time off. Please take a moment to welcome the newest member of Local 2209, MPS Group. They are the cleaners in the Paint and Body shops at Fort Wayne Assembly.

We have successfully put all of the

Amalgamated Chairs and most of the Committee persons through the UAW Grievance Handling class. This is an important step in building strength for the Amalgamated Units. A big thank you to the training center and Amanda Meier, E-Board liaison for the Education Committee for all their help in gathering all the materials and curriculum needed for this task. The next step for educating the Amalgamated Units is a class to help them understand their contracts and build membership and respect in their units.

As previously mentioned, UAW Local 2209 has created an online store in association with Flying Needle Embroidery. Items will be available for a limited time. All orders will be placed and paid for online. Any proceeds from store sales will be rotated

through the Local Standing Committees. We are looking for your ideas and designs to sell to our members. If you have an idea or design, please do not hesitate to contact the union hall.

Congratulations to the winner of the gun raffle! Ray Spirnak was the lucky winner. All proceeds from this raffle will go to support Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Fort Wayne. We will be having more raffles to support this organization in the future. Watch Local 2209 communications for more information.

In Solidarity
Jim Peters



Rich LeTourneau

Shop Chair Unit 1 (General Motors)

Regardless of what political party you are affiliated with, the events that took place on the United States Capitol on January 6th 2021 are inexcusable. Not only did they break an entry on our Capitol, they breached the security of an entire nation. The whole world watched in horror as they crashed the building and later took pictures and stole classified information belonging to the elected administration of the US government. We are the country that sets the standards, benchmarks and policies which other countries have embraced. That display of recklessness sent a real clear message to the rest of the world just how easy and weak we can be if someone in our government decides to turn a blind eye to the obvious. If you don't believe there will be long term residual effects from this, you're only fooling yourself.

This country made it clear that

Disgrace on American Soil!

day, to the rest of the world, that all it takes is a few thousand people who just binged watched "The Patriot" and "Braveheart" can seize an American federal establishment without resistance. Some claimed they were fighting for their freedom. REALLY! America in 2021? It appeared to me they were roaming the cabinet pretty freely from what we all witnessed. Even third world countries would have taken a more drastic approach to intruders breaking into government buildings than this country did. Many of them made remarks that this building belongs to us, the taxpayer of this country and we have the right to break into it. If those protecting the building had that same belief, they more than likely would have opened fire on all of them because, in essence, it would have been their house too that was being destroyed.

It is difficult to criticize the actions of those who were hired to protect our homeland security unless you were there, and I wasn't. Having said that, all of America witnessed BLM marches across the country in 2020, including the one on Capitol Hill. I have been on several UAW marches and protests; I will be the first to tell you I do not condone the burning of buildings and looting property that doesn't

belong to me, because it's against the law. I also do not condone for one minute what took place on American soil January 6, 2021 in our Capitol building. I strongly believe had those involved in a BLM march done the same thing, this country would have been burying thousands of Americans of every race that was on that march.

I am sure several of you may not understand the severity of what took place that day, so I will break it down a little, put in layman's terms if you will. If someone crashes through your front door threatening your family while you are all on the couch watching TV, are you going to welcome them in the living room and introduce them to your family? Or will you welcome them with a hollow point? That's how they will be greeted at my house, they will all be treated the same, because I am going to protect my family the right way, so the message is sent to those who may try it again. This country does not and should not have the luxury to spare the lives of any group or organization that puts the lives of American families in jeopardy. Who failed us on January 6th 2021? Would you let this happen in your house? Or would you protect your family?

In Memoriam

*For those that are no longer with us
let us not say goodbye
but remember the time they were with us.*

Harry Sponsler	3 Dec (70)
Kenneth R Keller *	6 Dec (68)
Albert E Saboski Jr	9 Dec (75)
Jean M Mitchell ^	7 Dec (62)
Willie T Peacock	30 Dec (83)
Anthony L Slater	31 Dec (68)
Gerald Babbitt Sr	7 Jan (68)

* Active member ^ Retiree spouse

Please notify Local 2209 staff or the Retiree Chapter if you know of a loss.

Recent Retirees

December

Cynthia Indrutz Jeffrey Terrace
Rickie Martin

January

Vicky Alspaugh Gregory Husk
Douglas Bowersock Jerry Koeneman
Rodney Burton Philip Lacey
Michael Carroll Kevin Love
Deborah Dooley Chesley Nelson
Rick Garrett Anthony Slater



Retiree Chapter Corner



Diana Bovie-Koomler

Retiree Chair

Just a reminder that the Chapter will not hold meetings while it might pose a risk to our retirees. Currently, May is the earliest it might occur. It would require a lot of factors to fall into the right place for it to happen.

It would require people getting vaccinated as soon as they can, positivity rates decreasing substantially, and preferably businesses, schools, and other community activities can all reopen. Everyone needs to do their part to make this happen.

In the meantime, follow safety protocols even when you get vaccinated. That includes family members that do not live with you. Get your vaccination as soon as you can. Currently it requires two shots. If you have concerns about any medical condition you have with the vaccine, consult your doctor.

As soon as it is determined that Chapter meetings can start back up the Chapter newsletter will be mailed to the retirees. Make sure you keep your mailing address updated.

We have a Facebook Group (UAW Retiree Chapter 2209) that is available only to our retirees and their spouses. To join you must answer the questions before access will be provided.

Be Well - Be Safe

Questions

If you have any questions

call: 260-267-5930

or email:

chapter2209.recsecty@gmail.com

Timely Medicare Enrollment is Important

Enrollment for Medicare begins 3 months prior to your 65th birthday and ends 3 months after your birthday.

Why is it important?

Once you or your dependent are eligible for Medicare, your benefits under the UAW Retiree Medical Benefits Trust (also referred to as "the Trust") will be paid as if you have Medicare coverage, whether or not you are enrolled. Enrolling in Part A and Part B will allow you to avoid paying additional out-of-pocket medical expenses. The Trust will not pay amounts that Medicare would have paid. You will be responsible for paying these amounts.

If you enroll in Part A and/or B the month you turn 65 or during the last three months of your initial Enrollment Period, the start date for your Medicare coverage will be delayed.

Surviving Spouses age 65 or older must enroll in both Medicare Part A and Part B in order to be eligible for health care coverage provided by the Trust. In the event of the retiree's death, the surviving spouse will not be eligible for coverage unless he or she is enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B, if eligible.

Penalty for Failure to Timely Enroll in Medicare

It is important for both you and your Dependents to enroll in Medicare when first eligible. Medicare Part B requires a monthly premium. The cost of the Medicare Part B premium will go up 10% for each full 12-month period an individual was eligible for Medicare Part B during the initial enrollment period but did not enroll. If you did not enroll when first eligible, and later choose to enroll, you must wait until the next Medicare Part B open enrollment period, which is January 1 through March 31 of each year. Your Medicare Part B will be effective on July 1 of the year you enroll.

Mandatory Medicare Enrollment for Surviving Spouses/Surviving Same-Sex Domestic Partners

An eligible Surviving Spouse or

Surviving Same-Sex Domestic Partner who turns age 65 must enroll in Medicare Part B when first eligible. If your Spouse or Same-Sex Domestic Partner is age 65 or older, and does not have Medicare Part B when you die, he or she will not be eligible for coverage under the Plans. When the Spouse or Same-Sex Domestic Partner provides evidence of enrollment in Medicare Part B, coverage will be available subject to the applicable monthly health care contributions.

Once I become eligible for Medicare will my health care plan change?

Effective January 1, 2018, Medicare Advantage (MA) PPO plans are the primary plan for Medicare members. This means as members enrolled in the Traditional Care Network become Medicare eligible, the Trust will automatically enroll them into a Medicare Advantage PPO plan on January 1, following the year in which they become Medicare enrolled unless they:

- Contact Retiree Health Care Connect (RHCC) at 866-637-7555 to remain in their current plan or choose another available option.
- Enroll in another (such as an individual) MA plan.
- Fail to meet criteria for auto enrollment.

Warnings

Throw away any mailing for Medicare Supplement plans not from the UAW Trust. The UAW Trust Medicare Advantage plans are the best plans.

They will try selling their plans by phone too and some may claim they are from Medicare. Do not give them any information about yourself.



Shane B. Davis

Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Duties of the Financial Secretary

UAW Constitution Article 40, Sections 4-10 include:

- Maintain accurate membership records
- Document all income and expenditures
- Prepare monthly and yearly financial reports
- File required governmental reports on timely basis

They also include performing miscellaneous duties as designated by the UAW International Constitution, local union bylaws and the past practices of the local. (Local union bylaws may never supersede the rules and regulations in the International Union's Constitution.)

FUND BALANCES (Oct - Dec 2020)

Unit 1 GM General Fund	\$ 1,547,555.57
Unit 2 GM Nurses	1,837.58
Unit 3 Caravan Facilities	42,596.69
Unit 4 Android	8,784.00
Unit 5 Android Maint Techs	2,558.53
Unit 6 Ruan Trucking	5,137.79
Unit 7 Advancez, LLC	24,455.71
Chaplaincy Fund	562.42
Citizenship & Legislative Fund	80.79
Civil and Human Rights Fund	1,650.89
Community Services Fund	2,896.29
Conservation Fund	90.00
Consumer Affairs Fund	75.87
Disaster Relief Fund	1,401.07
Education Dues Allocation Fund	5,820.76
Education Fund	3,966.79
Recreation Dues Allocation Fund	2,849.35
Recreation Fund	5,712.17
Union Label Fund	5,565.45
Veteran's Fund	4,802.87
Women's Fund	2,881.37
Building Fund	-28,041.89
Make a Wish Fund	7.27
New Member Orientation Fund	2,918.49
Strike Fund	71,566.39
Retired Workers Chapter Fund	86,360.40
Retiree Penny Transfer	4,135.28
Retiree Event Fund	1,935.78
Retiree Chapters (57, 305, 1405, 2357, 2911)	64,762.44
Total of All Funds	\$ 1,874,926.12

October 2020

Beginning Balance	\$1,849,870.74
Income	\$274,902.39
Expenditures	-\$288,812.26
Difference	-\$13,909.87
Balance	\$1,835,960.87

Charities \$2,450.11

November 2020

Beginning Balance	\$1,835,960.87
Income	\$292,441.05
Expenditures	-\$280,155.31
Difference	\$12,285.74
Balance	\$1,848,246.61

Charities \$24,663.34

December 2020

Beginning Balance	\$1,848,246.61
Income	\$317,594.21
Expenditures	-\$290,914.70
Difference	\$26,679.51
Balance	\$1,874,926.12

Charities \$6,100.00

UAW Legal Services Plan 1099-MISC Form - 2020 Tax Year

The Plan's 1099-MISC forms are being mailed now to our members. The IRS has a service so you can see all of the 2020 tax forms online that have been submitted for you - including the Plan's 1099. Go to www.irs.gov, choose "Get Your Tax Record," and follow the instructions. Note that per IRS rules, the 1099-MISC is not due to be furnished to individuals until Jan. 31, so the forms will likely be available online by or after that date. Also note that the IRS is not accepting tax forms for filing until Feb. 12, 2021. Write to UAWCoordinator@uawlsps.com if you have more questions.

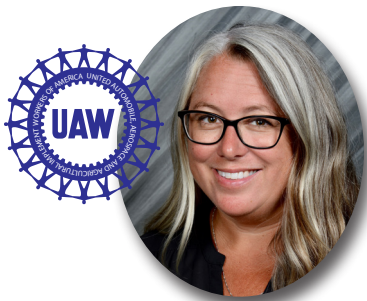


The UAW-FCA-Ford-General Motors Legal Services Plan has issued a 1099-MISC to those who were eligible to use the Plan benefit in 2020.

The 1099 shows that the 2020 taxable value of your legal services fringe benefit is \$23.58.

The 1099 is being furnished to all participants by the IRS deadline of January 31, 2021.

Answers to other questions pertaining to the form can be found at the website www.uawlegalservices.com



Amy Houston

Recording Secretary

Here we are, almost a year since all of us stopped doing everything because of COVID. I don't know about you, but I miss everything. I miss our Union Meetings, connecting with our members, friends and family, spending time helping others and most of all I miss people.

International UAW has still delayed any membership meetings until April 15 (or longer), but that doesn't mean that you can't volunteer and give back in the community as a UAW member. Our Community Services Commit-

tee volunteers regularly at the soup kitchen and around town, our Veterans Committee helps out at the Veterans Memorial Shrine on O'Day Road and our committees do many other things. None of these organizations have stopped needing help during the pandemic, so if you would like to get out and lend a hand they would love for you to join them! Is there an organization you have wanted to volunteer at? Let President Murphy know about what you would like to do and she will see if she can help make that happen! We love our communities and supporting organizations who need help. It is also a great opportunity to show your children or grandchildren the joy of serving others. We are able to adapt to the situations we have been put in. Now, when we go places we wear masks and social distance, which are both things that you can do while volunteering in the community! Let's

use this time to give back.

Another idea, since it seems we all have extra time since all activities and events have been canceled. What are the things you have always wanted to do but never seem to find the time? Organizing that closet, learning how to play the guitar or finally taking the time to sit down and finish that book you started to read years ago?

Make time for you. To do or learn the things you have always wanted to do. Instead of remembering this time as an awful, lonely and sad period of our lives, what if you remembered it as the year you started volunteering at the Soup Kitchen or the year you learned how to knit or the year you learned a second language. We have the choice of how to live our lives and we have the option to choose enrichment and happiness. That's what I'm going to do. What about you?

Every man has a right to utter what he thinks truth, and every other man has a right to knock him down for it. • Samuel Johnson



The UAW-GM Work-Family / EAP Office moved from the GA Atrium to the Administration Hallway near the Tour Holding room late last year and we're open and ready to serve you.

This location offers a much quieter, more private location to better meet your work-family needs.

Stop by or call - phone numbers remain the same.
(260) 673-2011 or (260) 673-2951

GM Benefits & Services Center

800-489-4646 • gmbenefits.com

- Health Care
- Sick Leave
- Disability
- Pension Checks, Calculations & Estimates
- Paperwork for Retirement
- Life Insurance and Beneficiary Accounts
- SUB Benefits
- Personal Savings Plan (PSP / 401K)
- Wage and Employment Verification

Local 2209

Chaplaincy Committee



Do you need someone to
Pray for you?
Pray with you?

Or just a kind ear to listen?

The Chaplaincy Committee
is here to serve, day and night.
Don't hesitate to call.

To be connected to a Chaplain:

Union Hall	260-672-2209
Michele Buckler	260-515-0662
Belva Parkison	765-210-2704
Cinde Mustaine	937-344-3563
Joel Picklesimer	260-249-7787

Find us on Facebook

UAW 2209 Chaplaincy

Prayer requests will be kept private.

Sometimes there are obstacles in the road, in this journey of life. Some days we can handle it, others, it's a struggle. Know that there is someone here that is praying for you. Whether you want to specify what your prayer is or not, we are here.

Pieces to a Puzzle

by Denzel Wallace • Local Voices Writer

2020 has definitely made its mark on modern day history. But moving during a worldwide pandemic surely adds icing to the cake. Picking up and moving your entire family while everything is closed? Talk about stress that no one wants. Nevertheless, my transfer to Fort Wayne Assembly has been a great experience so far.

Local 2209 has been one of the best unions that I have had a chance to be a part of. From the very first week of orientation, multiple elected officials have helped myself and other transfers make this transition as easy as possible. If you're having problems or need any help be sure to speak up. In my personal experience, there is always someone close by that can assist you in finding a solution.

Communication has also been top tier as well. It is easy to find and apply for job postings. The automatic text messages and union newspaper helps keep me informed on all important topics.

But let's be honest, most transfers want to know about one thing, **WHAT IS THERE TO DO HERE?** If anyone thinks like me, I love trying new food. Although I haven't been able to get out to do much, I have been

able to try a few nearby restaurants. So far my personal favorites are "The Storming Crab" and "Tower Bar & Grill". I would love to try a lot of the local favorites if anyone is willing to share these hidden gems with other transfers and myself.

I have had the chance to reach out to a few transfers as well. "Third shift is great, but I wish we had more food options in the cafeteria like the 1st and 2nd shifts do." - Pasha Kakela (3rd shift chassis). Pasha told me he didn't have any issues while talking to him. "I am also pleased with the manpower so far," Pasha adds during our conversation.

"It took some time to get adjusted at first." - Jacob Bloch (3rd shift Body). Jacob speaks on moving during a pandemic. "Moving during COVID-19 has definitely added stress on me and my family, not to mention it also limits what you can do," he then goes on to express his ideas for involvement. "I'm not sure if they have it available but I would enjoy seeing some union sports and more things bringing us together outside of work safely during the pandemic. It could also give transfers like us the opportunity to meet our fellow union members and build new

friendships." and to an extent, I agree with him.

Meeting your coworkers has become more challenging during this time. You get to meet people in your area and team, but I just realized not long ago that because of our masks and safety glasses, I have no idea what some of them actually look like. I ran into a friend of mine Al (3rd shift skilled trades) who is also a transfer. We greeted each other as if we had never met before. Once our conversation continued, we recognized each other right away. It was at that moment that I noticed the masks may have a bigger effect on our lives than I originally thought.

Local Voices would like to hear your story as well. If you are a transfer, we'd like to hear your experience here at Fort Wayne. And if anyone has suggestions on things to do, places to go/eat, or any other information that you think may be helpful or useful for transfers, we would like to hear from you as well!

If you have anything you would like to contribute for this story please email localvoice2209@gmail.com to the attention of Denzel Wallace.

New P3 app, What's That?

by Katie Holder • Local Voices Writer



1-800-342-STOP
1-800-342-7867

You may have heard Crime Stoppers are introducing a new app to Fort Wayne called P3. I sat down with the Chairman of the board Royce White this week to get him to answer some basic questions on this new app. P3 was

explained to me as an app for citizens of Fort Wayne and surrounding counties. Users can log on to, simply with just a creation of a pin number. This pin number is how the tipster keeps their identity anonymous. After the creation of the pin number they select the city where the crime was committed, and then finally the type of crime that was committed. The best feature of this app is that the app allows law enforcement to have a two-way dialog with the tipster. This is different from the call system that was

in place before. Another neat aspect of the app is that Indiana's Most Wanted and Crime Stoppers are both connected to this system, hopefully ensuring more crimes will be solved. This new app is available to residents of Fort Wayne February 1st. Also, please like the Greater Fort Wayne Crime Stopper Facebook page so you can stay informed on crimes that law enforcement needs help with. Donations to Crime Stoppers can also be made through PayPal on their website crimestoppersfw.org.

Serving the Community Above and Beyond

by Katie Holder • Local Voices Writer

Paula Friedrich, our current Chair of the Community Services Committee, has really made it a mission of hers to make this Committee really successful. This is not as an opinion but a fact after seeing all the accomplishments that this committee accomplished in the months surrounding the holidays.

When asked what all the events they participated in were the list went as follows: volunteered weekly at the St. Mary's Soup Kitchen, they held a food drive for Associated Churches, they participated in Coats for Kids, they adopted families for the Salvation Army, they volunteered at the YWCA to hand out coats donated by Meijer's, they handed out meals for Miss Virginia's Soup Kitchen, and finally they prepared meals for a Christmas dinner at the Fort Wayne Rescue Mission.

When asked if volunteers were hard to find, Friedrich replied "Absolutely not! I always had more than enough people wanting to help." This alone shows how UAW Local 2209 members and their families are willing and ready to give a helping hand when they see someone in need. One of the

main obstacles of course that Friedrich and the committee had to face were events being cancelled due to the pandemic but the accomplishments were still many. Friedrich states, "I was a little surprised that even though we are in the middle of a pandemic people were still willing to get out there and help others. I worked with a lot of elderly couples that had volunteered for years and they didn't let the virus stop them from doing their part. It was truly amazing."

Courtney Gagnepaine mentioned her greatest joy from these experiences were, "seeing the community receive the food and gifts they needed for themselves and their children." The Community Service Committee has a future goal of every month finding a need that the committee can help with. "Despite this pandemic I want us to be out helping the community any way we can," says Friedrich. Friedrich wanted to end this update by saying, "Thank you to everyone that helped out the Community Service Committee during our holiday projects. I would like to thank all the other committees who helped adopt Salva-

tion Army families. Everyone at the hall was amazing too! Erika Keeser, Shane Davis, Johnny Taylor, and Todd were awesome! I would also like to thank Holi Murphy for supporting our ventures!

I can say that UAW Local 2209 thanks the Community Service Committee for all that you have done! If you are interested in becoming a member of this community you can reach out to the hall, or you can reach out to the hall to volunteer for upcoming events they might have. It's a good way to show our kids the value of serving others. Thank you Paula for your time on providing us with this update.



↑ St Mary's Soup Kitchen ↓



Fort Wayne Rescue Mission
Preparing Christmas meals



John Robert Lewis (1940-2020)



"Get in Good Trouble, Necessary Trouble, and Help Redeem the Soul of America."

John Lewis was born on February 21, 1940, in Troy, Alabama. He was a civil rights activist, Congressman, and author. Lewis graduated from the American Baptist Theological Seminary and received a bachelor's degree in religion and philosophy from Fisk University.

While living in Nashville, Tennessee, he became a leader in the student sit-in movement. In 1960, he was a co-founder and later the 3rd Chairman of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

Lewis participated in the Freedom Rides, the 1963 March on Washington, and the Selma to Montgomery

Marches. During the late 1960s through the 1980s, Lewis devoted his time to various community organizing and voter registration efforts, in order to secure the legal Civil Rights victories of the 1960s.

In 1987, Lewis was elected to the House of Representatives from Georgia, where he was also known as the "Conscience of Congress". In 2011, he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Barack Obama. John Lewis passed away at the age of 80 in Atlanta, Georgia, on July 17, 2020.

Source: NARA Rediscovering Black History

Edmund Pettus Bridge

In Selma, Alabama, the Edmund Pettus Bridge was the site of "Bloody Sunday" on March 7, 1965. Alabama state troopers using whips, nightsticks and tear gas beat back the peaceful marchers. John Lewis, 25 years old at the time, was a key organizer for this march.

Dr. Martin Luther King on March 9, 1965 led a march to the bridge. Due to a restraining order King turned the march around after leading them in prayer.

On March 21 King led marchers out of Selma, over the Pettus Bridge on the road to the state capitol in Montgomery, Alabama.



Dr Martin Luther King and Walter Reuther

Walk to Freedom - June 23, 1963

The largest civil rights demonstration in history was held in Detroit, with 125,000 marchers. They marched down to Cobo Hall. It was there that Dr. Martin Luther King gave an early version of his "I Have a Dream" speech, he delivered it at the March

on Washington two months later. The date was chosen to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the 1943 Detroit Riots in which 34 mostly African Americans were killed.

In addition to King, UAW President, Walter Reuther was a speaker. The resources of the UAW were placed at the disposal of King by Reuther for the "Walk to Freedom. Staffers also worked on different campaigns within the civil rights movement that included putting messages from Dr. King in UAW publications. As indicated, Reuther was an early strong supporter of the civil rights movement.

Lillian Hatcher

World War II was the start of Lillian Hatcher's many years fighting for social justice. While doing defense work at Briggs Manufacturing in Detroit, she noticed that African-American women were passed over for promotions to riveter positions. Determined to do something about it, she joined UAW Local 742 and the Double Victory Club, an African-American group that advocated for equal rights in the war industries. She eventually



was promoted to a riveter position.

From there, she won election to Local 742's executive board and soon after was appointed an International representative with the UAW's newly formed Women's Bureau, the first African-American woman to be appointed a UAW International representative. Through the next decades, she served on countless social justice boards and committees, including the U.S. Labor Department's War Production Board and Advisory Council

to the Women's Bureau, the United Nation's Education and Economic Council, and in the UAW's Fair Practices and Anti-Discrimination Department. She also served as a delegate to the 1961-62 Michigan Constitutional Convention where she helped establish the Michigan Civil Rights Commission. Hatcher was an active member of the NAACP, the National Council of Negro Women, the Democratic Party, and numerous other civil and women's rights groups.

Source: UAW (uaw.org) Black History Month Spotlight

White Shirt Day

Content extracted from UAW.org with updates

UAW members will celebrate White Shirt Day, honoring the workers who participated in the Flint Sit-Down Strike of 1936 and 1937. In the face of anti-union sentiment, brutal working conditions, and low wages, men and women working for General Motors came together to orchestrate a

historic sit-in, where they occupied the Flint factory and demanded a seat at the bargaining table with GM.

On February 11th, 1937, the tumultuous two month sit-in came to a close. For the first time, General Motors agreed to recognize the United Autoworkers Union as the official

bargaining representative of all GM employees, securing pay increases and lunch breaks for all of their workers, and exploding union membership from 30,000 to 500,000 members in the year following the sit-in. Following the strike, workers wore white shirts every February 11th to show that laborers and “blue-collar” workers deserve the same respect as their “white-collar” counterparts.

Bert Christenson, a member of UAW Local 598, initiated White Shirt Day, on February 11, 1948.

The meaning of White Shirt Day — celebrating the struggles and accomplishments of workers who’ve come before us and fought for fairness, dignity, and respect in the workplace — is especially salient today. As General Motors moves forward with their plan to close factories and lay off thousands of workers in Michigan, Ohio, and Maryland, UAW workers continue to engage in the struggle for respect and job security.



UAW History Photo - Flint Sit-Down Strike Dec 1936-Feb 1937

A New President, A New Outlook

by Katie Holder - Local Voices Writer

Before I lose my audience, I won't speak who won, didn't win, got the election stolen, none of the above. I wanted to write a personal piece on the division that was caused from this election. I personally have lost several really close friends, this alone is confusing to my 11-year-old son, he wonders how this could possibly be. Never in my life have I seen such decisiveness in our private lives due to politics. I also have had the experience of losing some family members from my life because of politics this year as well. I won't say that these family members or I, lost any love for each other. It's more like the loss of desire to spend any of our valuable time together, or a fear of being around them because it

might just create more problems. After this last year in the world, I more than once have worried if I suffer from PTSD from all these experiences. I don't handle a huge amount of stress very well anyways, mixed in with the unknowing of a major issue that you can't help or solve (Covid). This doesn't help with the stress of dealing with our friends and family and their opposite opinions.

Moving forward I don't think that my friend relationships will be repaired and maybe some of yours won't either. This may be hard to move past from but I found out the true colors of some people and I choose not to spend my available time with them anymore. I don't know what the future holds

but I learned some major lessons from this year and I hope that I behave and make better choices on how I conduct myself moving forward. I truly hope that the nation as a whole will work on unity. I think it would be great for the older generations, and also the kids that are watching us as their example. I don't like how I behaved at times this last year but I can work on how I handle situations in the future. I wish all the members of 2209 a better year this year and like always if you feel that you may need some help for any issues please contact your EAP representative. They can be reached at 260-673-2011, or 260-673-2951.

**UAW Statement on the Firing of the General
Counsel and Assistant General Counsel of the
National Labor Relations Board
January 23, 2021**

“The principal existence for the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) is to protect workers in the workplace against infringement on their rights to have a voice in the workplace.

Both the former General Counsel and Assistant General Counsel, who refused to resign and were fired this past week, came from legal backgrounds with firms that were notorious for union busting and placing obstacles in the path of women and men seeking a voice in the workplace. This anti-worker, pro-management background was evident in the way department rules were engaged to the detriment of workers in the workplace.

President Biden was right to seek their resignations, and right to affirm that those positions should be focused on the NLRB mission to protect workers in the workplace. Let us hope the position of NLRB General Counsel will never again be used in such a twisted purpose as was the case with these former Trump Administration appointees, who administered their duties to the detriment of those they were hired to protect.”

**Statement of Rory L. Gamble
on the Nomination of
Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh
as Labor Secretary**

“Today’s selection of Boston Mayor Marty Walsh puts a labor member, long-time administrator and friend of working families in a very important but often underappreciated agency. There is much work to be done to re-establish the rightful role of the Labor Department from a period of ideological attack on working families and labor workplace protections. For the last four years, the labor protection mechanisms at the Labor Department and the appointees of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) have been dominated by anti-worker ideologues. The nomination of Marty Walsh is a strong step toward restoring the integrity and fair application of labor laws to our nation.”

NLRB Counsel - Peter Robb Fired

by Gary Schepp • Local Voices Writer

The National Labor Board (NLRB) is an independent agency of the federal government. It is governed by a five-person board and a General Counsel appointed by the President with consent of the Senate. The General Counsel is appointed to a four-year term and the board members to five-year terms. Federal law requires the NLRB to promote collective bargaining as the policy of the United States.

Peter Robb was the General Counsel fired by President Joe Biden after refusing to resign. He had been appointed by Trump in 2017. Robb had worked for the Reagan administration and was involved in the firing of 11,345 striking air traffic controllers in 1981. They were also banned from federal service for life.

Robb’s career consisted of representing employers against workers and at one time worked for Proskaus-

er Rose a notorious anti-union law firm. He applied his tactics against the rights of working people that he was required to protect. They included allowing the mass termination of employees during the pandemic, making it difficult to negotiate first contracts,

During his time as General Counsel at the NLRB he attempted to restructured the agency by diminishing the role of the regional directors and have decision-making power in his office. He argued that Scabby the Rat should be unprotected. He argued that groups challenges to wage theft should not be considered concerted activity. He changed the standards use to determine when unions violated the duty of fair representation.

Instead of COVID-19 complaints being handled by the NLRB Regions he directed them to be sent to his office. Vacancies in the agency were not filled and he failed to spend its bud-

get as required by law. The workload increased for those still remaining in their jobs. Robb reduced time restriction on investigating cases, making it difficult for NLRB attorneys and investigators to do develop the evidence needed to make the cases. With a lack of evidence he would dismiss the cases. Thus delaying proper justice.

Robb’s anti-worker stance caused many unions to stop filing complaints with the NLRB to prevent him from establishing radical anti-labor precedents.

Under a 1983 memo when Chief Justice John Roberts was serving as associate White House, he explained that the NLRB general counsel “serves at the pleasure of the President.” It can be considered an employment-at-will position. He suffered the same action he was trying to impose on union members.

See page 13 for Employment-at-Will

Why the UAW is Involved in Politics

by Gary Schepp • Local Voices Writer

From the beginning, labor unions and working people have always been under attack by anti-worker coalitions consisting of businesses, organizations, state legislatures, and elected officials. There is always a flood of bills introduced in Congress and the state legislatures attacking workers and their working conditions.

The primary attacks against unions and working people are by the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Right to Work Committee. Their goals? To campaign against unions, fair labor practices, increases in the minimum wage and legal protections for workers.

They all had a much easier time the last four years. The Department of Labor (DOL) prevented millions of

workers from receiving overtime pay. They attempted to allow employers to pocket the tips of their employees if it was more than the minimum wage. The Secretary of Labor hid the economic analysis showing it would be costly to the workers.

The DOL was instructed to review a fiduciary rule that required financial advisers to act in their clients' best interest which was intended to delay implementation. The rule was delayed until December 2020 but with reduced protection to retirement savers.

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) created rules that made it difficult for employees to organize during nonwork hours. It also allowed workers to be misclassified for representation purposes. Rules were weakened that allowed representation

elections to be streamlined. Employees forced to arbitrate grievances and disallowed class or collective claims. It allowed employers to unilaterally impose discretionary discipline without bargaining with the union.

Those are just a few of the examples. It is why the UAW, other labor unions, and worker friendly organizations are involved in politics. They fight for and support working people and their families to help them have better lives.

Politics is involved in our life, our families, and our community. A better life is possible only when our voices are heard at the ballot box and by our elected officials at all levels of government.

Employment-at-Will

by Gary Schepp • Local Voices Writer

In the United States, every state except Montana allows employers to terminate an employee for any reason, except for an illegal one, or for no reason. The USA is one of the few countries that has "at-will". Most countries allow employers to terminate employees only for cause.

In "at-will" states, employers can change the terms of employment without notice or consequences. That includes wages, benefits, paid time off, work schedule, or job duties.

There are statutory exceptions to the at-will employment doctrine. They include illegal discrimination based on an employee's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status. State statutes may include other factors.

It is illegal to retaliate against an employee for engaging in legally proper, necessary, or desirable activities. Examples include claiming minimum wage or overtime compensation,

engaging in union activities, opposing unlawful discriminatory activities, filing for workers' compensation, and whistleblowing. Whistleblowing is generally in the public sector but in some states there are statutes covering the private sector.

Most employees are required to sign an at-will agreement by the employer. Employers can refuse to hire anyone failing to sign an agreement. Even if an employee does not sign an at-will agreement they are still considered an at-will employee.

For a person not to be considered an at-will employee requires them to have a contract or be a federal employee. There are two kinds of contracts. Contractual and implied. I will only cover contractual agreements.

Contractual can be individual or collective agreements. Individual agreements are usually intended for athletes, entertainers, and high-level executives. They may include such

features as the specific position to fill, a fixed term of employment, severance, bonus or incentive pay deals, and/or non-compete clauses. Both the employer and employee hire their own attorney to draw up the agreement.

Collective bargaining agreements (CBA) are between the company and employees belonging to a labor union. A CBA sets the terms and conditions of employment for wages, working hours and conditions, benefits, grievance and arbitration procedures, strike limitations, rights and responsibilities of the union, and rights and responsibilities of management.

While regular contracts are for a fixed term, the obligations of the parties in a CBA do not end. The terms of the expired contract generally continue while representatives from the union and management are bargaining in good faith for a successor collective bargaining agreement.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

by Gary Schepp



Santa first showed up at Fort Wayne Assembly when he was hired in April 1995. He was just turning 45 in a few months and already sporting a gray beard and hair. Santa had worked for a roofing company where his alternate life began.

The owner of the roofing company had a subcontractor friend and the wife of the friend had seven sons with their own kids. For Christmas each year one of the uncles would play Santa for the family. As the kids got older they started figuring that Santa was either the father or uncle that was missing in their Christmas gathering.

In the early 1980s, the grandma decided to throw a wrench into the mix to throw her grandkids off the trail. The grandma knew of Santa and asked him to be Santa for her grandkids. At the time he was very bashful and told her he couldn't because he didn't have a Santa suit. Grandma did though! His first stint as Santa with the grandkids threw their previous idea about who was Santa for a loop.

In 1995, Body Shop Superintendent Lloyd White asked Santa to help with the annual in-plant collection for Associated Churches. In 1996, he played Santa for the Down Syndrome Association of Northeast Indiana (DSANI). Then it was on to Shepherd's House. Later expanding to 30 to 40 families. Soon the phone started blowing up with requests for Santa.

In 2002, Mrs. Santa Claus showed up and the requests increased. Starting in the middle of November, Santa and Mrs. Claus would begin working the weekends including Friday to per-

form the 130-135 bookings scheduled in November and December. Their schedule involved 12 to 13 hours daily. After Santa retired from GM in 2013 and Mrs. Claus in 2012 they expanded their bookings to include the weekdays.

The last 41 years, Santa and Mrs. Claus bookings included benefits, families, private parties, restaurants, parades, tv shows, hospitals, nursing homes, and photo shoots with children and J. C.

Penney. For families needing help it was for free.

During 2020, Covid-19 caused bookings to be reduced from 140 down to 30. Families cried when they called to cancel. Some with 4 generations enjoying the visit by Santa and Mrs. Claus. Santa and Mrs. Claus followed Covid-19 protocol, changing their gloves regularly and wore face masks avoiding getting infected. Not being able to hold and hug the kids was difficult for them and likely for the kids too.

In addition to their bookings, Santa would make hospital visits for children of GM employees. In one instance, a father at a UAW Christmas Party brought his kids. Their only wish was for Santa to make their grandpa who was in a coma well again. They were told that Santa and Mrs. Claus would pray for him everyday and for them to do it too. Santa saw the father two weeks later at work and expected to be told their grandpa had not made it. Instead, his dad woke up on Christmas morning wanting to know why he was there. It is the lives of people they touch that bring both tears and laughter to them that brings joy to what they do.

Santa is a UAW 2209 Retiree and usually is not known by the name of Paul Gebert. His forklift drivers license even displayed only Santa as his name. Mrs. Claus is the Linda Ropa-Gebert. They were sweethearts from different high schools during their junior year. It wasn't until after Paul's divorce and the passing of Linda's husband their paths crossed again in 2002 but not getting together until 2004. They married in 2006.



UAW 2209 Christmas Party (2019)

Photo by Gary Schepp

Capitalism versus Labor (Part Two of Two)

by Scott La Mar • edited by Julie DeLong

The United States was once the Industrial Giant of the World. This is no longer the case. The capitalists have intentionally engineered the demise of the United States industrial power in favor of other less socially and economically advanced countries of the world. In these countries the capitalists can build factories and produce a product cheaper and in turn, reap a higher profit. In these economically depressed areas of the world, the capitalists not only employ people at extremely poor wages with few or no benefits at all, but they enjoy not having to deal with safety organizations such as OSHA and the EPA as well as proper sanitation and many other factors that save them money. These also affect the laborers and environment of these countries.

An example is General Electric who recently pronounced they would freeze their employees' pensions. This

is not new to us because many companies have been freezing or doing away with them altogether for 40 years. General Electric and many companies have negotiated pension programs



Julie DeLong & Scott La Mar

years ago with their unions or the companies themselves have provided these pension programs. These companies, in most cases, have not fully funded their pensions. Now years later, their pension programs have become a drain on their companies. Had these companies fully funded their pension programs and never borrowed from their pensions, they would have sustained themselves, even invested at a low rate for many years. This goes to show that the capitalists have never held up their end of these bargains. They always have held the laborers down.

The capitalists have now finally achieved a goal they have long desired: the top billionaires are now paying a

lower tax rate than the bottom 50% of American laborers. The billionaires are now only paying 23% taxes as opposed to the lowest 50% of American laborers paying 24.2 % on average. This is not to forget that these billionaires can afford to hire accountants who know the tax laws - written by the capitalists - to save them from paying the 23% tax rate which allow them to pay lower taxes or pay no tax at all through these tax loop holes, written by the capitalists.

Every working individual, laborer, needs to stop and reflect on the world in which one lives and objectively focus on who is getting rich. The capitalists are getting rich on the back of every individual laborer. Remember the laborers only want their share of the pie, not the whole pie.

However, the capitalists have all the advantages. They have money, education, politicians, lobbyists, the power of government, and yes, let's not forget their GREED, which are all in the favor of the capitalists to control the laborer.

*If corporate profits are so high...
Why do they need a tax cut?*

Funny, I never hear concerns about how the McDonald's CEO making \$18,012,549 per year might drive up the price of a Big Mac.

"We can either have democracy in this country or we can have great wealth concentrated in the hands of a few; but we can't have both."

— Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis

Long ago we stated the reason for labor organizations. We said that they were organized out of the necessities of the situation: that a single employee was helpless in dealing with an employer; ... that union was essential to give the laborers opportunity to deal on equality with their employer.

— Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes (1937)

We in the UAW have been in the forefront of every basic struggle in the country, and we have learned some very simple, fundamental truths; that you cannot solve a human problem by pitting one human being against another human being. We have learned that the only way you can solve human problems is to get people to join hands and to find answers to those problems together. And it's for this reason that we reject the voices of extremism in America, whether they be white or black; for there are no separate answers. There are no white answers to the problems, there are no black answers; there are only common answers that we must find together in the solidarity of our common humanity.

Walter Reuther

1970 UAW Convention, April 1970



UAW Local 2209
5820 E 900 N
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*"The time is always right to do what is right."
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

*"Freedom is never given; it is won."
A. Philip Randolph*