



United Auto Workers LOCAL 598 EYE OPENER



Home of the Original
Fisher 2 Sit-Downers

VOLUME 44 ISSUE 08

www.uawlocal598.org

AUGUST 2025

Executive Orders Are Erasing Our Rights

by Debi Kirchner, Editor

The President fired NLRB member Gwynne Wilcox by email, claiming she “disfavored employers.” Now the NLRB has no quorum: no one to certify new unions, no one to enforce contracts, no one to hold employers accountable. Every fight is pushed into the courts.

Meanwhile, the Department of Labor is being gutted. Mass resignations, budget cuts, and anti-worker leadership cripple enforcement of wage laws, safety protections, civil rights, and international standards.

With executive orders, workers’ rights are being erased across the board:

- ▶ **Collective bargaining ended** for 75% of federal unionized workers
- ▶ **Home health aides stripped** of minimum wage and overtime protections
- ▶ **Farmworkers denied** the right to organize
- ▶ **OSHA safety standards rolled back**
- ▶ **Affirmative action & DEI mandates revoked**
- ▶ **Civil service jobs turned into “at-will” positions**
- ▶ **EEOC oversight and enforcement weakened**

We’ve fought before – since the 1935 Wagner Act gave us the right to organize – and we’ve won through unity. But today we face our biggest battle since then. Never before has a President been so determined to erase our rights and rewrite history. Recent actions show that he may even be trying to take away our right to vote. We can’t let that happen.

Apathy is our greatest enemy.

Now is the time to pay attention. Now is the time to fight.

What will you do?



This is not just about federal or low-wage workers.

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL.



The Significance of UAW Red Wednesdays

"This practice is more than just a fashion statement; it symbolizes solidarity, unity, and a dedicated commitment to workers' rights."

STEPHANIE RILEY

from the PRESIDENT'S DESK

The modern tradition dates back to 1989 with the Communications Workers of America (CWA) whose members wear red on Thursdays. Gerry Horgan was a CWA chief steward for Westchester County in New York who died in August 1989 while he worked a picket line. He left behind a wife and two daughters. The vehicle that struck him was driven by a scab and the teenage daughter of a manager, who was never charged with his death.

CWA members wear red shirts on Thursday to remember Horgan and the sacrifices he made protecting the picket line. The United Auto Workers adopted this tradition by wearing red on Wednesdays. This practice is more than just a fashion statement; it symbolizes solidarity, unity, and a dedicated commitment to workers' rights. It also represents our own members who have lost their lives on the picket line. Here's a closer look at the reasons behind this vibrant display of support.

1. Symbol of Solidarity

Wearing red on Wednesdays serves as a visual expression of solidarity among UAW members. The color red is often associated with strength and courage, making it an ideal choice for union members who are fighting for fair wages, better working conditions, and comprehensive benefits. By wearing red, workers visibly demonstrate to management and the world, their alignment with the union's goals and aspirations.

2. Building a Sense of Community

The practice of wearing red fosters a sense of community among UAW members. When individuals see their colleagues and peers dressed in red, it reinforces the idea that they are part of something larger than themselves. This collective identity can boost morale and encourage workers to stand together, particularly during negotiations with employers or when facing workplace challenges.



3. Raising Awareness

Red Wednesdays help raise awareness not only within the union but also among the public at large. When UAW members wear red in their workplaces, it often sparks conversations and inquiries from others, allowing them to explain the significance of union activities, labor rights, and the ongoing struggles workers face.

This visibility can help garner support from the community and strengthen the union's position.

4. Promoting Labor Rights

The tradition of wearing red is tied to a broader movement advocating for labor rights across various sectors. By adopting this practice, UAW members align themselves with a rich history of labor activism that seeks to ensure fair treatment, equitable pay, and safe working conditions for all workers, not just those in the automotive industry.

5. Inspiring Future Generations

Wearing red on Wednesdays also serves as a way to inspire future generations of workers and union members. It acts as a reminder of the importance of organizing, advocating for workers' rights, and standing up for justice in the workplace. Young workers can learn about the significance of union solidarity through this simple yet effective practice.

6. Impact on Management

When a Large group of workers wear red, it sends a clear message to management that they are united and stand together.

Conclusion

The tradition of UAW members wearing red on Wednesdays

encapsulates the essence of unity, activism, and community spirit among workers. It transcends mere attire, becoming a powerful symbol of the challenges and victories that embody the labor movement. As UAW members continue to wear red, they not only honor their commitment to improving their working lives but also inspire others to stand up for what is right – an enduring reminder that when workers unite, they can achieve remarkable change.



President Riley

Production Interruptions Come at a Cost

"...the 3% general wage increase that will take effect September 15th and can be seen on your September 26th paycheck."

ERIC WELTER

SHOP CHAIRMAN



We are wrapping up summer and have been dealing with a number of production interruptions. All of our Saturdays are canceled through September, as a result of GM deciding to shift valve bodies to a couple different recalls to satisfy those customers with vehicles at dealerships waiting for repair. This is not all bad, since it gives our members time to enjoy the rest of summer before the kids go back to school. There is always a possibility that they get through the parts production quicker than anticipated and they put some Saturday back in towards the end of September. The chance of this increases based on more recent production losses and the negative impact on the third quarter.

Those additional losses include an electrical surge that took down the plants computer system, which resulted in second shift employees being sent home. Those employees are entitled to 4 hours call-in pay. In addition, seniority employees will receive short work week pay for the last four hours.

New in the 2023 National Agreement, our full-time temporary employees will also receive the short work week pay. Unfortunately, our part-time temporary workers only receive the call-in pay.

Compounding the problem, we had a separate supplier have a major breakdown, resulting in the plant sending people home and canceling Friday and Monday production. Those employees will receive appropriate call-in pay and more short work week pay. Whenever the plant deals with these losses, it can be good for

the people getting time off, but it comes at a cost. The company begins to look at every penny it is spending to offset the lost volume as much as possible. It scrutinizes overtime, reduces utility cost by increasing the temperature in the plant, and they resist any effort to provide more than the contract dictates. It's a very difficult bargaining environment, but the Committeebody continues to take it on.

Our Full-Time Temporary employees were denied unemployment for shut down and we wrote a grievance for each employee. We recently completed the step-and-one-half with the company still denying the charges. We have to build a case that presents our argument in a way they know they will lose in arbitration. This takes some time and may result in the grievances going beyond the plant to be resolved. I will keep everyone informed as it progresses.

We have a couple wage increases coming in September, which were successfully won in the 2023 National Agreement. First, COLA will increase to \$1.10 per hour before shift premiums and overtime rates. The rate will go into effect September 1st and will be seen on your check September 12th. This is the point where the value of COLA exceeds the value of the \$1,500 bonuses that were in lieu of COLA in past agreements. This compounds on itself and will automatically roll into wages at the end of the agreement, producing future benefits and is how our wages grew prior to bankruptcy.

The second increase is the 3% general wage increase that will take effect September 15th and can be seen on your September 26th paycheck. This will elevate the production wage to \$38.07.

I would like to recommend members putting this raise into their 401(k)/ PSP. We have three raises left in this agreement – 3% in 2025, 3% in 2026, and 5% in 2027. This would result in 11% going into your retirement savings and would secure your future as it compounds for the balance of your career.



UAW LOCAL 598 WOMEN'S COMMITTEE T-SHIRT SALES

Submit Orders by September 23, 2025

MAKING STRIDES

Against Breast Cancer Walk this year!

OCTOBER 11th

In Downtown Flint
(on the flat lot)
9:00am



Scan the QR to purchase a Shirt!



Scan the QR to REGISTER for the Walk

<https://ci-stores.com/uaw598-wc/>



All proceeds go to Making Strides Against Breast Cancer

Save the Date for this year's **UAW Local 598**



MEMBER APPRECIATION PICNIC

Saturday, August 30th 11am-5pm



- ▶ **Cornhole**
- ▶ **Horseshoes**
- ▶ **Kickball**
- ▶ **Inflatables**
- ▶ **Obstacle Course**



Union City Fields
4193 Torrey Rd, Flint



- ▶ **Face Painting**
- ▶ **Music**
- ▶ **Petting Zoo**
- ▶ **Karaoke**
- ▶ **Great Food and More**

Volunteers Needed
Please Contact

Aubrie Main Trim 3rd Shift
Peggy Bond Quality 2nd Shift
Britta Rusaw Final 1st Shift
or call 810-240-6116

Our Dedication and Hard Work Leads the Way

"Under this new law, buyers of new vehicles, like the heavy-duty Chevy and GMC trucks you build, can now deduct up to \$10,000 in interest..."

CHAD FABBRO

FINANCIAL SECRETARY



To My Brothers and Sisters of UAW Local 598,

As the gears of the Flint Assembly plant continue to turn, building the backbone of America – our heavy-duty Chevy and GMC trucks – I wanted to take a moment to speak directly to each and every one of you. From the frame line to final inspection, every bolt tightened, every weld laid, and every component installed by your skilled hands contributes to a legacy of quality, durability, and American strength.

You are the proud inheritors of a rich tradition here in Flint. For decades, this city has been synonymous with automotive excellence, and it's because of the dedication and hard work of UAW members like yourselves that we continue to lead the way. When a customer drives off the lot in a new Silverado HD or Sierra HD, they're not just buying a truck; they're investing in a piece of American ingenuity, crafted with the unparalleled skill and commitment of UAW labor.

In a world that's constantly changing, one thing remains constant – the demand for vehicles that can tackle the toughest jobs day in and day out. Our heavy-duty trucks are the workhorses of countless industries – powering construction sites, hauling essential goods, and serving as reliable partners for small businesses and families across the country. And it's your dedication that ensures these trucks exceed expectations, proving their mettle mile after mile.

A Direct Benefit for American-Made Trucks – The "One Big Beautiful Bill"

I also want to highlight a recent development that underscores the importance of the work you do here in Flint. The "One Big Beautiful Bill" (OB BB), recently signed into law, includes a significant provision that directly benefits consumers who purchase vehicles assembled right here in America.

Under this new law, buyers of new vehicles, like the heavy-duty Chevy and GMC trucks you build, can now deduct up to \$10,000 in interest paid on their car loans from their federal taxes, provided the vehicle's final assembly took place in the United States. This is a powerful incentive, effectively lowering the overall cost of financing a new, American-made vehicle.

This provision isn't just about a tax break. It's a direct recognition from our government of the value of American manufacturing and the jobs it creates. It incentivizes consumers to

choose vehicles built by UAW members, strengthening demand for our products and securing our jobs for the future. It's a testament to the fact that when you buy American, you're not just getting a quality product – you're supporting American workers and communities.

We know the challenges that come with this work. The demanding pace, the precision required, and the commitment to safety that defines our daily lives on the line. But we also know the immense pride that comes from seeing a finished product roll off the line, knowing that your craftsmanship is embedded in every inch of it, and now, knowing that your work contributes to a direct financial benefit for American consumers.

As we look to the future, let us remember the power of our unity. The UAW was built on the principle that together, we are stronger. Our collective voice ensures fair wages, good benefits, and safe working conditions – all of which are essential for us to continue building the best trucks in the world. Let's keep supporting one another, upholding our high standards, and demonstrating the true value of union labor.

Thank you for your tireless efforts, your unwavering dedication, and your commitment to building the best heavy-duty trucks on the road. You are the heart of Flint Assembly, and you are the reason GM's heavy-duty trucks are trusted by millions.



UNION HALL • G-3293 VAN SLYKE ROAD, FLINT, MI 48507 • (810) 238-4605

President	Stephanie Riley	DISTRICT COMMITTEE / ALTERNATES
Vice President	John Jackson III	Ben Dunlop / Alex Perry
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		Bob Scott / Maurice Purches
		William McIntosh / Jacob Kohn
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BEACON O&M BARGAINING COMMITTEE

District Committeeperson Mark Leineke Alternate Rodney Haggard

M.P.S. BARGAINING COMMITTEE – DISTRICT COMMITTEE

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WORK & FAMILY REPS Cheryl Middleton, George Washington, Dave Yanta

EYE OPENER EDITOR Debi Kirchner

POLICY OF THE EYE OPENER

TO OUR READERS: The EYE OPENER is the voice of our Local and International Union. This is our vehicle for bringing to you, on a regular basis, the views and actions of the leaders you elected, so you can evaluate them. Through the paper, we explain Union policies and show how your dues are spent. The paper is also the voice of the members. We welcome articles from UAW members and stories about members. While we welcome your contributions, we ask that they be constructive. At no time will the editorial staff tolerate any defamatory remarks regarding any person or persons. We reserve the right to reply to those who seem to reflect a misunderstanding of the Union and its policies and to edit any article for clarity and length.

Opinions reflected in signed articles in the EYE OPENER do not necessarily represent the position or opinions of Local 598. Published monthly by UAW Local 598, G-3293 Van Slyke Road, Flint, MI 48507. Phone: 810-238-4605.

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ATTORNEYS at the HALL

LEGAL SERVICES FOR
LOCAL 598 MEMBERS

MONDAY

Richard Wagner 810.820.9111
Doud, Smith & Wagner
1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

TUESDAY

Robert MacDonald 810.234-2204
MacDonald & MacDonald, PLLC
2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

THURSDAY

John Chowning 810.695.2110
Chowning & Edgard, P.C.
12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

FRIDAY

Neal Wilensky 810.606.0410
Kaechele & Wilensky, P.C.
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.



PURSE BINGO WAS A SUCCESS... \$1,471 Raised for the Breast Cancer Walk

by Melissa Bowen, Local 598 Trustee
and Women's Committee Chair

I've noticed in the past when the Women's Committee hosts an event, interest seems very slow at the beginning. Usually, in the days prior to, that's when sales and participation increase significantly. Perhaps this pattern could be attributed to our fluctuating overtime schedule, but it is very nerve wracking when you're not sure if anyone is going to show up. We've experienced this phenomenon with our previous events like *Painting with a Twist* and *Bowling for Breast Cancer Awareness*.

As an anxious person, I always have to remind myself that we're a very last-minute Local and everything is going to turn out fine.

On Sunday, August 3rd, the UAW Local 598 Women's Committee hosted a *Designer Purse BINGO* for Making Strides Against Breast Cancer. An amazing assortment of bags were provided by our great sponsors – Millennial Ink, Unapologetic Americans, Genesee County CLUW, Shea Automotive Group, CBTU-Genesee County Chapter, UAW Local 651 Union Label Committee, Texas Roadhouse, and Biggby Coffee. The Women's Committee provided a delicious buffet of mid-afternoon snacks and refreshments.

Typical to form, it wasn't until the week before that registration

increased. When we had 13 people sign up, I was able to breathe a sigh of relief, because we had 13 different purses that could be won. In the end, attendance far surpassed my expectations. We're ecstatic to announce that, we had over 40 BINGO players, **raising \$1,471 for Making Strides Against Breast Cancer!**

We exceeded our fundraising goal for this event and the attendees had a great time.

When life gets hectic, I often tell myself that things will turn out fine and everything works out eventually. That sentiment seems to come to fruition, most of the time, and when it comes to Local 598, it's reassuring to know that it's true. When relying on our membership, not only does it work out fine, often times, it's better than what I imagined.

*Thank you to all of our
Bingo players and volunteers for
helping us excel in our fundraising!*



**Purse
Bingo
Event**





B I N G O
spelled success

for the
American
Cancer Society
at our Women's
Committee's

Purse Bingo Event



**Thank You
to all**

who took time out to
attend this event,
those organizations
that donated the
designer purses,
and the volunteers
who made it all
come together.



Helping To Make Our COMMUNITY STRONGER





On Saturday, July 26, your Local 598
Community Service Committee, along
with many volunteers, participated in a

BACKPACK GIVEAWAY and FOOD DISTRIBUTION EVENT

in Flint, MI
Thank You
to all who
showed up
to help!



Photos courtesy of Britta Rusaw



**OUR NEXT
UNION MEETING**
will be held at 2:00 p.m.
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21
LOCAL 598 UNION HALL
G-3293 VAN SLYKE ROAD, FLINT



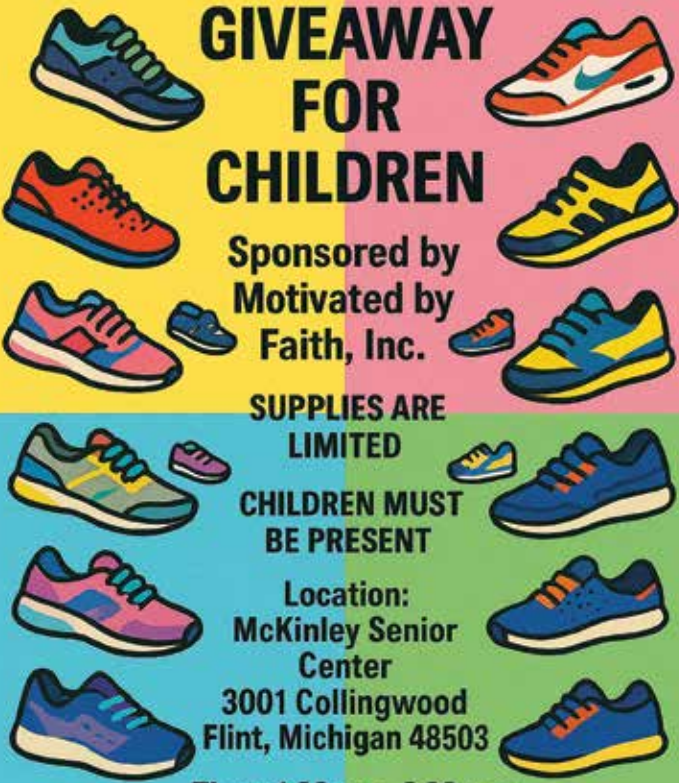
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Time: 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.
Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025
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Sheriff Chris Swanson

invites you to join the

*Biggest Candy Givaway
in Genesee County!*

**2ND
ANNUAL
LABOR DAY
PARADE**

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2025

FAMILY FUN | SUPPORT LOCAL UNIONS

Staging begins at 10:00 AM
Bristol Road Church of Christ
1315 W. Bristol Road
Flint, MI 48507

Parade Kicks Off at 11:00 AM
Parade Ends at **UAW Region 1D**
1940 W. Atherton Road,
Flint, MI 48507

ANNUAL UAW REGION 1D PROGRAM TO FOLLOW AT SITDOWNERS PARK





GREAT DAY at FENTON FARMS FOR OUR GOLF OUTING!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, Sept. 11th

Retiree Chapter Meeting, 12:00 noon
Ruben Burks Hall, Local 598

Thursday, October 9th

Retiree Chapter Meeting, 12:00 noon
Ruben Burks Hall, Local 598

Tuesday-Wednesday
October 21st - 22nd

Possible Casino Trip
Details at our September 11th Meeting





We had fun waiting for the golfers at the 6th hole.



It's always nice to see old friends.



FIRST PLACE WINNERS



Congrats to all our winners!

ROSS AWARD



Golf Outing Success

"...Fenton Farms, the staff there always treats us good and makes our golfers all feel special."

JANET WOODSON

RETIRED WORKERS CHAIR



We've missed you guys and are very happy to have you coming back September 9 at 12:00 noon.

Our golf outing was a great success this year at Fenton Farms, the staff there always treats us good and makes our golfers all feel special. Thanks to the staff there. While there, we took the opportunity to recognize our past, long-time Chapter Financial Secretary, Thurmon Ross, and to thank him for his many years of service. *He has been a Local 598 member since 1961.*

GOLF OUTING RESULTS

1st Place:	Gerald (Jerry) Cole Tony Chiano	Don Cooper Fred Wright
2nd Place:	Dan McKim Kenny Franks	Earl Newby John Fil
3rd Place:	Jim Dawson Rich Ferriby	Bob Parisaeu Wayne Barry
4th Place:	Dennis Kozlowski Gary Wilkins	Jim Goodwin Steve Miller

Congrats to all, we hope you had as nice a time as we had.

We had some newly retired workers attend our June meeting, before our break. We hope to see more of you in the coming months. In September's meeting we will discuss our Fall Casino Trip. On October 9th the UAW Trust will attend our meeting and discuss the 2026 changes to our Trust benefits, and answer any questions you might have.





to our recent retirees.

We hope to see you at our
RETIRED WORKERS CHAPTER MEETING held on
the second Thursday of the month at 12:00 p.m.



Stephen Coron
(08-01-25)



Steve Newman
(09-01-25)



Larry Baker & wife Renay
Retired 8-1-25 • Deceased 8-10-25

CELEBRATING HIS RETIREMENT, MOURNING HIS DEATH

UAW Local 598 would like to send our thoughts and prayers to the Baker family for the loss of our union brother Larry Baker. Diagnosed with a serious medical condition, Larry was able to retire, but sadly succumbed to his illness far too soon. He will be missed by those that knew and worked with him.

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		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)		8045	7985
b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	2891	2833
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g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))		150	141
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*If you are claiming electronic copies, go to line 16 on page 3. If you are not claiming electronic copies, skip to line 17 on page 3.

		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
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a. Paid Electronic Copies		0	0
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17. Publication of Statement of Ownership
☒ If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the **AUGUST 2025** issue of this publication.
☐ Publication not required.

18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner
Stephanie Riley **STEPHANIE RILEY, PRESIDENT** Date **08/19/2025**

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First Place Team: Randy Duplanty, Captain



Second Place Team: Brian Langdon, Captain



Third Place Team: Craig Pumfrey, Captain

A great day for golf!

This is just a sneak peek at the Local 598 Golf Outing. We will have more photos next month, but we can announce...



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LOOK FOR
MORE PHOTOS
OF LOCAL 598's
GOLF OUTING
IN NEXT MONTH'S
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