VOLUME 44 ISSUE 1

www.uawlocal598.org

NOVEMBER 2025

HOLIDAY SEASON Activities Abound...





OLD NEWSBOYS

Our annual *Old Newsboys Drive* will begin in the plant on 3rd shift on November 30, and the annual paper sale will be Friday, December 5th. Sponsor a child for just \$20 (the same price as last year). More information on the *Old NewsBoys*, including how to donate on-line can be found at: www.onbflint.org.

POLAR PLUNGE 2026

Due to the scheduled plant downtime in January, we are starting our 2026 Polar Plunge fundraising early. Shirts are available to order now.

(See more information in President Riley's article.)



Our annual

TOYS FOR TOTS

December Union Meetingwill be held at 2:00 p.m.
on December 7th.
We hope to see you there.

Sunday, december 14
1:00-4:00 p.m.

UAW LOCAL 598
UNION HALL

Come get your picture
taken with Santa

Join us in putting a smile on the face of a child this holiday season.

Honoring Our Veterans, Serving Our Community

"The auto industry has always been part of America's backbone – building not just the world's best trucks, but opportunity, progress, and pride."

STEPHANIE RILEY

from the **PRESIDENT'S DESK**

Solidarity, Compassion, Commitment

As we move through another busy year at UAW Local 598, I'm reminded daily of what makes this Local exceptional – our solidarity, our compassion, and our commitment to one another. This November, we had the privilege of celebrating some of the most honorable among us – our Veterans.

Celebrating Our Veterans

On Veterans Day, we pause to honor the men and women who have worn our nation's uniform, those who put service above self to defend the freedoms we all enjoy. At UAW Local 598 and GM Flint Assembly, we're proud to count so many Veterans among our ranks. They've traded one uniform for another, from serving our country to serving our community and fellow members. That spirit of duty, discipline, and solidarity runs deep in our plant.

The auto industry has always been part of America's backbone—building not just the world's best trucks, but opportunity, progress, and pride. And none of that would be possible without the courage of those who protect our way of life. The freedom to organize, to build, and to provide for our families exists because someone, somewhere, stood up and answered the call to serve.

To all our Veterans at UAW Local 598, *thank you!* You remind us that strength doesn't come from standing alone, but from







standing together — on the battlefield, on the shop floor, and on the picket line. And as we look toward the future of the industry with new technology, new challenges, and new generations of workers, let's carry that same commitment forward. Let's keep fighting for fairness, for good jobs, and for the dignity that every working man and woman deserves. That's how we truly honor our Veterans.

On the Monday before Veterans Day, we gathered inside the plant on Fifth Avenue for lunch to honor our Veterans. Sharing a meal with those who have served, listening to their stories, shaking hands, and expressing our gratitude started a very meaningful tradition.

On Veterans Day we joined the community at McFarlan Veteran's Memorial Park in Flint for a ceremony honoring all who served. I am proud to share that UAW Local 598 was awarded a plaque recognizing our patriotism, support, and dedication to McFarlan Veterans Memorial Park. This honor belongs to every member who supports our Veteran-focused efforts year after year.

Join Us for Snapshots with Santa – December 14th

As we move into the holiday season, we're excited to welcome families to *Snapshots with Santa* on Sunday, December 14th. Bring your children and grandchildren for photos, treats, and holiday cheer. We look forward to celebrating with you.

Holiday Drives for Toys for Tots and Old Newsboys

Our *Toys for Tots Drive* and *Old Newsboys Drive* are officially underway. These programs provide joy and dignity to children and families in need during the holidays. If you're able to donate, please do. Every contribution helps brighten someone's season.

continued on next page





Polar Plunge for Special Olympics – February

We're also preparing for the Polar Plunge for Special Olympics coming up in February. Each year, Local 598 members take the icy leap to support Special Olympics athletes across Michigan – a tradition that reflects the heart and generosity of our Local.

We're selling special-edition T-shirts to help raise funds for our *Polar Plunge* efforts, with all proceeds going directly to Special Olympics. A QR code is provided at the bottom of this page to purchase shirts.

Offensive Photos Addressed

I want to address an oversight in our most recent monthly Local Union paper. In one of the photos we published, an individual was wearing a T-shirt with language that was inappropriate and inconsistent with the values we uphold as a union.

I also want to sincerely apologize to our membership for not catching this before the paper went to print. As President, it is my responsibility to ensure that everything we publish reflects the professionalism, solidarity, and respect that define our Local. In this instance, I fell short of that standard.

Please know that this was an honest mistake, and there was absolutely no intention to offend or disrespect any member(s). I have already taken steps to strengthen our review process so that something like this does not happen again. Thank you for your understanding, your continued trust, and your commitment to our union.

In Solidarity

Thank you to every member who continues to lift this Local and our community. Whether we are honoring our Veterans, supporting families in need, or preparing for a new year of challenges and opportunities, we do it together – always. President Riley



Welcome to 598's Polar Plunge Apparel site, supporting Special Olympics



Reflecting On Things I Am Thankful For

"I am also very thankful for this membership, Without pause, I say I have the best Local Union membership in the business."

> **ERIC WELTER SHOP CHAIRMAN**

With Thanksgiving approaching, I always take time to reflect on things that I am thankful for. Of course, first and foremost is my family. I am also very thankful for this membership. Without pause, I say I have the best Local Union membership in the business. Beyond the incredible performance they exhibit in the factory, our people always answer the bell for the community and our Local Union. I just want to thank everyone for their hard work and dedication, but also for your continued support.

There are difficult times at many Local Unions within General Motors. Detroit Hamtramck is about to indefinitely layoff 1,200



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HEALTH & SAFETY REPS......Mike Dankert, Doug Culhane, Jeff Wier WORK & FAMILY REPS Cheryl Middleton, George Washington, Dave Yanta

EYE OPENER EDITOR ...

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. POSTMASTER: All Form 3579's for the the EYE OPENER, are to be forwarded to the EYE OPENER, UAW Local 598, G-3293 Van Slyke Rd., Flint, MI 48507. Periodicals Postage Paid at Flint, Michigan. Annual subscription \$1.70 for members only; retirees \$1.00.

workers, Fairfax just changed 700 workers from temporary layoff to indefinite, Brownstown Battery is shuttering all of their workers, and GMCH Rochester and Ultium Battery has volumebased TLOs. This is a lot of workers who will have a rough Christmas, with finances tightening up for them. This is a result of a shifting away from EVs. Let's keep these members in our hearts and minds this holiday season. They didn't do anything wrong to deserve or cause this negative impact to their lives.

The plant has just released an extension of our TLO for retooling. We will now return on January 26th. Those who are needed during this week extension to work will be notified. In addition, they have added Saturday, December 20th for 1st and 3rd shift. This layoff or extension is not volume-related, and the company intends on high production volumes when we return.

Last year, due to some cancelations, the balance of Saturdays was off, 2nd shift worked 18, 3rd shift worked 18, but 1st shift only worked 14. This is viewed by members with very different agendas. Some don't want to work, and are upset that 1st worked less. Others are upset they missed 4 chances to earn wages. Both are valid positions.

In addition, we have members who feel 1st shift received preferential treatment in scheduling. When I got them to agree to rotate Saturdays, there is a set cadence of combinations to run 2 shift Saturdays. Even though there was no intention to favor one shift over another, I asked the plant to change the order of combinations, which they agreed to.

We have a heavy schedule next year of each shift running 22 Saturdays. I am not sure if changing the rotation will have the desired effect, but you can't say I didn't respond to the membership. In the larger picture of things, I will take overtime as a problem verses cutting shifts and laying off workers.





WARNING: Your Health Care Is At Risk

"Changes to the ACA...will likely lead to a significant increase in what we pay for our job-based insurance."

CHAD FABBRO

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The Looming Threat to Our Premiums

Brothers and Sisters, as your Financial Secretary, my primary duty is to ensure the financial health of our Local and protect the economic well-being of every member. Today, I must sound an alarm about an issue that directly threatens your family budget: the rising cost of our health care premiums if key parts of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) are cut or allowed to expire.

We often think of the ACA only in terms of the individual marketplace, but the law has foundational provisions that keep the entire health care system, including our union-negotiated plans, more stable and affordable. Changes to the ACA, particularly the expiration of enhanced subsidies and the potential for a full repeal, will likely lead to a significant increase in what we pay for our job-based insurance.

Why Repealing the ACA Hits Our Union Plan

When the ACA is weakened, it destabilizes the entire healthcare ecosystem, and those costs are often shifted to private plans like ours. Here are the major factors that will push our premiums up:

1. The Burden of Uncompensated Care Will Be Shifted to Us

A full or partial repeal of the ACA would strip millions of Americans of their coverage, leading to a massive increase in "uncompensated care" – medical treatment for which hospitals and doctors are not paid.

- Hospitals and providers don't just absorb this cost. They make up the difference by seeking greater reimbursement from commercial insurance carriers our Union plan.
- Industry analysts estimate that working families with employment-based coverage could see their yearly health care costs increase by hundreds of dollars per person, due to this cost shifting. This is a hidden tax on our Union health benefits.

2. Insurance Markets Become Unstable (The "Death Spiral" Effect)

The ACA introduced regulations and subsidies designed to keep insurance markets balanced by ensuring both healthy and sick individuals are in the pool.

- The biggest current risk is the expiration of the Enhanced Premium Tax Credits (subsidies). When these subsidies disappear, insurance becomes unaffordable for millions of lower- and middle-income Americans who buy coverage on their own.
- If healthier people are priced out and drop coverage, the remaining insurance pool is disproportionately made up of older and sicker individuals. This drives the average cost per enrollee higher for all insurers, which in turn leads to higher premiums for everyone, including us.

3. Loss of Consumer Protections

While our union contract provides strong benefits, the ACA

established critical, baseline protections that any repeal effort could erase:

- No Lifetime or Annual Limits: The ACA bars insurance companies from placing dollar limits on the amount of care you can receive in a year or over a lifetime. Repeal could bring these harmful limits back, potentially bankrupting a member with a chronic or catastrophic illness.
- Coverage for Adult Children: The ACA requires plans to cover dependent children up to age 26. Repeal could end this benefit, forcing young adults to purchase expensive individual coverage or go uninsured.
- Free Preventive Care: Services like annual physicals, immunizations, and cancer screenings are currently covered with no co-pays or deductibles. Losing this provision would discourage preventive care, leading to sicker members and higher treatment costs down the road, which again, drives up our premiums.

Our Plan of Action

We cannot afford to sit on the sidelines as the cost of our hard-earned health care is placed in jeopardy. Our Union was built on the principle of fighting for better wages, benefits, and working conditions. This fight extends to protecting the value of our health plan.

What you need to do now:

- 1. *Educate Yourself*: Talk to your co-workers and neighbors about how the ACA impacts everyone not just those in the marketplace.
- 2. Contact Your Representatives: Call, write, or email your members of Congress and make it clear that you expect them to protect the ACA provisions that stabilize health care costs for all working families.
- 3. Stay United: Our strength is in our numbers. We will continue to track legislative threats and organize to protect our benefits at the bargaining table and in the political arena. The price of inaction is a heavier burden on our premiums, and that is a cost our members should not have to pay.



Moving Through This Holiday Season

"Volunteering and making someone else smile during the holiday season can be a good remedy for self-happiness."

D'ANDRE JACKSON

RECORDING SECRETARY

The year is winding down. Lawn mowers get pushed to the back of the garage, and the snowblowers are pulled to the front. The days are getting shorter and the nights grow longer. Old Man Winter is knocking at the door, and he's coming in regardless of whether you open it or not.

The holiday season is upon us, and for many of us it's a time to enjoy the love of family and friends. However, for some of us, it's a time that can highlight those loved ones who have passed on and aren't here with us anymore. For some, that makes the season feel a little heavier, a little quieter, and makes the holiday season a lot less happy than what the commercials promise.

Keep an eye out for those family and friends who may be feeling the weight of the holiday season. Take the time to make a call, stop by for a visit, or even invite someone over for a holiday dinner and fellowship. Volunteering and making someone else smile during the holiday season can be a good remedy for selfhappiness if the weight of the season is upon you.

As we move through this season, try to hold onto the good wherever you can find it. Even in the tough moments, even in the



The team for this one was Flint Assembly/GM Cares Volunteer of the month Nick Dekalita, Johnny Jackson, D'Andre Jackson, Chad Fabbro, and Teresa McGinnis. The family we helped is Clyde and wife Robbie. Robbie is a 651 retiree from AC Spark Plug. They are great people and are very thankful for everyone involved.

quiet spaces, there's always something worth appreciating and being thankful for. As the saying goes, "We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorns have roses."

Happy Thanksgiving.





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Don't Let Them Fool You: Your Guide to Spotting Manipulation in 2026

by Debi Kirchner, Editor

The noise is deafening. Not the sound of grandkids playing or the roar at Ford Field when the Lions pull off a last-minute win. This noise is different – it's the overwhelming flood of political messages, social media posts, campaign ads, and "news" that will only grow louder as we head into 2026.

Maybe you're the type who reads everything, debating politics with anyone who'll listen. Or maybe you've had enough, you've unfriended the loudest voices, and now you just scroll past headlines on your way to cat videos and Christmas decorating tips. Either way, it's time to tune back in.

2026 is a critical year for union members. We'll be electing leaders at every level – city councils, state representatives, Congress, and the Senate. These officials make decisions about labor law, workplace safety, healthcare, and pensions that directly affect our livelihoods. Just as important, we'll vote in our own UAW democracy – Constitutional Convention delegates who'll shape our Union's future, International Executive Board members (including our President and Regional Director), and this spring, our Local Executive Board members and committee representatives.

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With so much at stake, we need to cast informed votes – not votes based on manipulation, fear, or lies. That means learning to tell the difference between information, misinformation, and propaganda.

Know the Difference: Information, Misinformation, and Propaganda

Information is accurate, verifiable, and helps you make sound decisions. It presents facts clearly, acknowledges sources, and respects your intelligence.

Misinformation is false or inaccurate information spread without intent to deceive. Someone shares it believing it's true, but it's not – they simply got the facts wrong. Misinformation can spread quickly, especially on social media, because people trust their friends and family.

Disinformation is false information deliberately created and spread to deceive you. This is intentional lying designed to manipulate your opinions and actions. Employers, politicians, and special interests use disinformation to confuse workers and divide us.

Propaganda is the systematic effort to shape your beliefs and direct your behavior toward a specific political goal. It often uses biased or misleading information presented in ways that trigger emotional responses rather than critical thinking. Propaganda can include true facts, but they're cherry-picked and framed to manipulate you into a predetermined conclusion.

How They Try to Influence Your Vote

Every election cycle, union members face a barrage of messages from unions, employers, politicians, and interest groups trying to sway our votes. Recognizing these tactics helps us make decisions that truly serve our interests.

Legitimate Persuasion Techniques

Fact-Based Messaging uses clear, accurate information about wages, benefits, workplace safety, and job security. Good persuasion presents relevant facts, explains consequences, and respects your ability to think for yourself.

continued on next page

Values-Based Framing connects issues to principles we share as Union members - solidarity, fairness, and economic justice. This shows how a vote aligns with our collective values.

Emotional Appeals can be powerful when grounded in truth. Messages that inspire pride in our union's achievements or legitimate concern about threats to our jobs have their place – as long as they're backed by facts, not just feelings.

Direct Engagement through one-onone conversations, CAP meetings, and member education builds trust and allows open dialogue. This gives us a chance to ask questions, meet candidates and hear concerns from others in our community.

Warning Signs: Manipulation and Deception

Cherry-Picked Facts present only part of the story – statistics taken out of context or selectively highlighting only positives or negatives to mislead you.

Repeated Lies become "common knowledge" through sheer repetition, even without evidence. If you hear the same claim everywhere but can't find credible sources, you're likely seeing coordinated disinformation.

Personal Attacks target individuals rather than addressing real issues. Smear campaigns distract from substantive

debate and signal weak arguments.

Pressure and Coercion use incentives, threats, or intimidation to influence your vote. Whether it's a politician hinting at job consequences or anyone else pressuring you, your vote should always be voluntary and based on your interests, not fear.

False Equivalence presents "both sides" as equally valid when one is based on facts and the other on lies. Not all opinions deserve equal weight.

Your Action Plan: How to Stay Informed

Ask Questions. When a message makes big promises or stirs strong emotions, demand specifics. Who benefits from this? What's the source? Are there facts to back this up, or just feelings?

Check Multiple Sources. Read your Union's communications, but also verify information through independent, credible news sources. Compare what different sides say about the same issue. Look for consensus among reliable sources, not just one outlet's spin.

Trust, But Verify. Your Union fights for your interests every day, but even good information deserves verification. Check facts, ask for evidence, and participate in open discussions.

Watch for Red Flags. Be skeptical of messages that use extreme language, rely heavily on fear or anger, lack sources, or attack people instead of ideas. If something seems designed to make you stop thinking and just react, step back.

Talk to Each Other. Have respectful conversations with fellow members - both active and retired. We build power through solidarity, and that includes sharing knowledge and helping each other spot manipulation.

The Stakes Are Too High to Sit Out

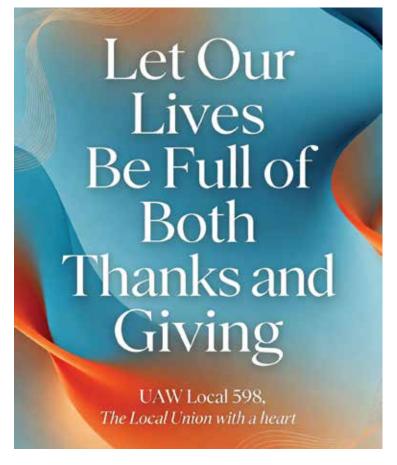
Union power grows when members are well-informed and confident in their choices. Every vote we cast in 2026, whether for government officials or union leaders, will shape our future: our contracts, our benefits, our retirement security, and the next generation of workers' rights.

Don't wait until you're drowning in campaign ads and robocalls to figure out where you stand. Start paying attention now. Read. Ask questions. Demand facts. Cut through the noise.

Remember this parable: "The forest was shrinking, but the trees kept voting for the axe. The axe was clever and convinced the trees that since his handle was made of wood, he was one of them."

Who will you be listening to? Make sure it's not someone who's actually wielding the axe.

BOTTOM LINE: Information empowers us. Misinformation confuses us. Propaganda manipulates us. Learn the difference, stay alert, and vote with your eyes wide open in 2026. Our union, our democracy – and our future – depend on it.







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

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The Holidays Are Upon Us

"...if you can do something for someone in need this holiday season, please take the time to do it."

JANET WOODSON

RETIRED WORKERS CHAIR

This is the time of the year that we all should be thankful and full of joy. But, sadly we have so many people who are not. This time of the year is so hard because the kids look forward to something special in their lives, but so many kids and adults do without even the small things. So, if you can do something for someone in need this holiday season, please take the time to do it.

If you want to participate in the Local's *Toys For Tots* drive, you can drop toys off at the Union Hall anytime during regular business hours. You are also welcome to attend the regular Local Membership Toys For Tots meeting on December 7th, where you can drop off your toy and then stay to celebrate how generous our membership is.

We had a great Thanksgiving meeting dinner. Lots of food and a good number of people. Some lucky members won food baskets for door prizes. So, don't miss our Christmas Dinner meeting on December 11th at 12:00 noon. Tickets are \$5.00 and can be purchased at the front office anytime or at the door on the day of the meeting.

We just celebrated Veteran's Day, so thank you to all that have served and the families who supported them.



Retired Workers Chapter

Chapter Meetings held at 12:00 p.m. 🐹 in the LOCAL 598 UNION HALL

Wednesday, Dec. 10 Great Lakes Shopping Center Trip

With Local 699. Call me for details.

Thursday, Dec. 11 Retiree Christmas Dinner

Local 598 Union Hall, 12:00 noon

Thursday, January 8 Retiree Chapter Meeting Local 598 Union Hall, 12:00 noon



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MICHAEL DONAHUE VON BALLARD

Our UAW Local 598 family extend their deepest sympathy to the family and friend of these deceased members.

If you know of a Local 598 member who has recently passed, please submit their name at the Union Hall, so they may be listed here in the Eye Opener.



Big enough to serve all your needs. Small enough to care.

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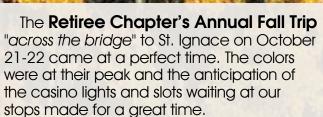
Fall Color Trip

Region Meeting and









On Thursday, November 13, our **Monthly** Meeting was only made better by the great meal and the chance to give "thanks" for the many blessings and friendships that we enjoy throughout the year.







