



UAW LOCAL 598

SERVING CHEVY TRUCK ASSEMBLY WORKERS

"A Local Union with a Heart"



Volume 40 / Issue 8

www.uawlocal598.org

AUGUST 2021

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Flint is a UAW/GM Town!



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ryan Buchalski

One may ask themselves, "Why do I care? Why do I vote? Why do I attend City Council meetings? Why do I write letters to congress? Just why? It doesn't seem to make a difference."

We have all felt that way at one time or another throughout our lives. No matter what the issue is, if it is important to you, it matters if the decision impacts others.

Recently, the Genesee County Board of Commissioners had a decision to make. It may have seemed like a simple decision or choice, but ultimately this decision could have impacted the "Vehicle City."

The UAW was ultimately formed in Flint and from that 44-day strike in the late 1930s, the middle class was born! Flint is also the birthplace of General Motors, so essentially Flint,

Michigan (located in Genesee County) is a union town. A GM town, if you will.

So, when the Genesee County Sheriff's Department needed to purchase

new vehicles, the choice should be simple – *Buy Union, Buy American... Buy General Motors!* But that wasn't the case.

The idea to purchase Ford Explorers was on the agenda. Can you imagine Ford Explorers in a UAW/GM Town where hundreds of thousands of active and retired members live? That idea was so ludicrous that our friend, Sheriff Chris Swanson, objected to driving a Ford.

On Wednesday, August 4th at 9:00 a.m., Region 1D Director Steve Dawes, myself, and other Local Union Presidents attended the commissioner's meeting and let our voices be heard. We each took to the microphone to tell them how we felt and how it was a shame to even consider Genesee County Law enforcement driving Fords.



Now, please don't get me wrong, I don't have anything against Fords or our UAW sisters and brothers who work for Ford. But bottom-line, *Flint isn't a Ford town!*

After we were allowed to speak, a roll call vote was taken, and all but one commissioner voted in favor to purchase Chevrolet Tahoes from our sisters and brothers in Arlington, Texas.

We are grateful to the commissioners who understood our message and voted to do the right thing, and, as always, thank you to Sheriff Swanson for supporting us. It may seem simple, but if gone unopposed, we could have seen a different scenario. Actions speak louder than words!

see **PRESIDENT'S REPORT** on page 2

Honoring 56 Years of the Voting Rights Act

August 6th marks the 56th anniversary of the signing of the Voting Rights Act, one of the most sweeping pieces of civil rights legislation in U.S. history. This ground-breaking measure was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson, in 1965, after the courageous efforts of Civil Rights leaders who marched, fought, and bled for the movement everywhere from Washington, D.C. to Selma, Alabama.

The Voting Rights Act was designed to knock down legal barriers at state and local levels that prevented African Americans from exercising their right to vote. These barriers may seem like a distant past, but the truth is that continued progress on protecting the right to vote is more important than ever. Multiple Supreme Court decisions in the last few years have undermined essential provisions of the Voting Rights Act, and assaults on the essential democratic right to vote are being issued daily by



state legislatures and third-party organizations.

Our right to vote may be constitutionally ensured, but it is far from guaranteed that we can access it without obstruction. This fight is not over. We must work harder than ever to protect our democracy — and the right of every U.S. citizen's voice to be heard at the ballot box, even if it takes moving mountains to do it.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

continued from Front Page

And now for greetings...

Greetings, Local 598 Sisters and brothers (active and retired),

I hope life has been treating you well. Welcome back to our active members who were on a brief layoff, and for those of you who were retained in the plant, I'll bet you are glad to see everyone back to work.

Life seems somewhat of a roller coaster ride lately, with plenty of ups and downs. However, through our strength, unity, and solidarity, nothing can get in the way of 598!

The auto industry has undoubtedly seen some crazy times with the shortage of crucial parts. For a guy like me, it has me

asking, how did we get in this situation? I have never claimed to know everything about the auto industry, but I am curious about how we became so dependent on other countries. The shortage of these foreign-made chips has crippled our industry.

Our very own congressman and 'Friend of the fighting 5th', Dan Kildee, also wants to understand that. On Tuesday, August 10th, Congressman Kildee sat down with me and the other members of our leadership team to discuss various topics, most notably the "chip" issue.

Congressman Kildee does a great job of listening and wants to understand issues facing our members and others. We appreciate his time and efforts,

knowing that he always has our backs! Congressman Kildee will keep us posted on any legislation he and his colleagues introduce that will impact or change our industry in the future. *Thanks, Dan!*

During the second one-week layoff period, things at the Union Hall were quite busy. The phones were filled with questions, and we had quite a few members pass through the doors of this great Union Hall.

We had GST Michigan Works, representatives from Congressman Kildee's office, along with State Rep. John Cherry, Rep. Tim Sneller, and State Senator Jim Ananich all here at the Hall assisting our members with unemployment issues. We couldn't be happier with the support our members received.

We had individuals who had problems from the last layoff, and they were able to get them resolved in person, in the comfort of their Union Hall, not with a faceless person on the other end of a phone line, on hold for hours. It's nice to have people like Dan and others who care about working men and women and their families. *Thank you, everyone!*

The "598 And You" classes, put on by our Education Committee and the Local 598 Leadership Team members, are gearing up for another round of classes. Classes are going to be held on September 14th, 15th, and 16th. This particular class will consist of our second shifters from all areas of the plant.

Classes will be held here at Local 598, with the possibility of one day

being held at Union City Fields (weather permitting). Class size is limited to 25 participants from all of our Local 598 units. Class hours will be 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Members participating will be paid 8 hours of lost time from the Union Hall, and lunch will be provided. Please see the form on page 4.

If you would like to attend the classes, complete and submit the form to the Union Hall no later than September 7th. Classes will be limited to the first 25 submissions and must take into consideration the area of the plant participants' work. We do not want to create a manpower shortage. *I look forward to seeing you there!*

As always, 598 is excited to help out with this year's Area 13 Special Olympics, "The Lois Craig Run". We are looking for volunteers to assist in this awesome event on August 27th. If you haven't participated before, I hope you can make it this year. It will take any frown and turn it upside down! Would you please let us know in advance if you can help out? *Thanks!*

The 598 Executive Board has met throughout the summer to conduct our regular business, but we are very much looking forward to seeing everyone on Sunday, September 19th at 2:00 p.m. for our membership meeting!

As always, thanks for your hard work and dedication to UAW Local 598, home of the Fisher Two Sit-downers!

And all at once, summer collapsed into fall.

– OSCAR WILDE

"A Local Union with a Heart"

EYE OPENER



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

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POLICY OF THE EYE OPENER

TO OUR READERS: This paper is the voice of our Local and International Union. This is our only 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 that 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: 238-4605.

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EDUCATION/PUBLICITY COMMITTEE
Debi Kirchner, Aaron McAlister, Gabrielle Clements, Randy Hamilton, Michelle Giorgis

PHOTOGRAPHERS
Debi Kirchner, Robin Stayton-Diehl

ATTORNEY'S SCHEDULED FOR UNION HALL

NAME OF ATTORNEY	PHONE	DAY AT UNION HALL	NAME OF FIRM	HOURS AT UNION HALL
RICHARD WAGNER	810-820-9111	MONDAY	DOUD, SMITH & WAGNER	1:00 - 3:00
ROBERT MacDONALD	810-234-2204	TUESDAY	MacDONALD & MacDONALD, PLLC	2:00 - 3:30
JOHN CHOWNING	810-695-2110	THURSDAY	CHOWNING & EDGAR, P.C.	12:30 - 2:00
NEAL WILENSKY	810-606-0410	FRIDAY	KAECHELE & WILENSKY, P.C.	9:00 - 11:00

Chips, Chips, Chips, the New Word for 2021

SHOP CHAIRMAN REPORT

by Eric Welter



The unemployment insurance process creates a lot of difficulties and frustrations for our members. I would like to recognize President Buchalski and Congressman Dan Kildee for working together to make the unemployment office available at the Union Hall to assist our members.

In addition, our UAW Benefit Reps do a great job of supporting unemployment issues, even though it's outside of their responsibilities. Thanks, everyone, for your support of the membership.

Chips, chips, chips, the new word for 2021, as the crisis continues. The supply of parts affected by semiconductor chips is closely monitored and changes daily. One day we are fine, and the next, we are not.

GM is going to continue their shy build strategy for any module that is easily accessible. The "building shy" strategy allows us to continue to produce and, as soon as possible, turn the trucks around, instead of just losing them. There are somewhere around 150 chips in each truck, so it is difficult to predict.

We were recently impacted by SDM, which is a module that is buried, so it cannot be easily harvested and repaired, so it is considered a "no-build" outage.

This impact was a result of a Covid outbreak in a chip plant in Malaysia. It is expected to improve slightly in September and be much better by the end of the year.

GM is still wanting us to run weekends and will make decisions about each weekend just prior.

We are not laying off PTT and we will need more once we stabilize. We are not expecting any further interruptions, but it's hard to say how Covid outbreaks in other

countries will impact us. The information changes quickly, and it is challenging to communicate.

This is sensitive information for GM, due to the competitiveness of the truck market.

You will be approached to take a workplace of choice survey. We have done these surveys in the past, and they are genuinely anonymous with no login needed. The only thing attached is that you work for Flint Assembly, not even which department. They will make computers available in your area and have Team Leaders relieve employees to take the 5-minute survey.

I encourage you to take the survey and be honest about your feelings, good and bad. We will use this information to make changes in the workplace and continue the things you like.

During Local negotiations, we were able to gain the return of our Paragraph 71 sheets to the Excel format. The Kronos format was difficult to read and didn't easily comply with our Equalization of Hours Agreement. GA will launch first, and I encourage you to view the layout on your Level 5 Board.

Typically, we wouldn't implement a change generated from Local negotiations until the Agreement is rolled out, but this was something we have been arguing for some time. It affects people's money every week, so we decided not to wait.

This is the same format we have used in the past and does not require ratification. The membership will benefit from returning to the clearer format.

These are challenging times, and I appreciate everyone's support for myself and the committeebody. We could not do it without the support of this great membership. *Thank you!*

THIS MONTH IN LABOR HISTORY

1935 Social Security Act

by Michelle Giorgis, Education Committee

Think back to what you've learned about the great depression. There was limited, if any, assistance available from the government for people struggling to maintain the day-to-day essentials. With nowhere to turn to for help, many Americans who worked their entire lives lost everything.

Near the end of the Great Depression, many were unemployed, and the poverty level among senior citizens was over fifty percent. The realization soon came that something needed to be done to provide a level of economic security to the American people in times of hardship and old age.

On August 14, 1935, President Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act into law, creating a benefits system that would help millions of people in the years to come. Initially, the primary purpose of the Social Security Act was to provide a type of safety net for the elderly, unemployed, and

disadvantaged through payroll taxes on workers and employers.

Today, the Social Security Act includes retirement benefits, survivors and death benefits, and disability benefits. Unemployment benefits are now separated from the Social Security Act. With the passing of the Social Security Act, the hope was to provide a means to those in need and possibly prevent such poverty as seen before.

Now, eighty-six years later, the Social Security Act is a crucial part of providing benefits to retired Americans. Once you reach a certain age, you'll have the capability to retire from working and start drawing the Social Security benefits you've paid into during your years of work. Thanks to the passing of the Social Security Act, many benefits are available that were not before.

Today, the Social Security Act of 1935 provides a sense of economic security and is, for most, an essential part when planning their retirement.



LOCAL 598 & YOU

Union Education Classes



- When: SEPTEMBER 14, 15, 16, 2021**
Tues. 9AM - 5PM, Wed. 9AM - 5PM, Thurs. 9AM - 5PM
- Where: UAW LOCAL 598 RUBEN BURKS HALL**
G-3293 Van Slyke Road, Flint, MI 48507
- Who: 2nd Shift, LOCAL 598 MEMBERS (All Units)**
(GM, GM-LOC, Aramark, Hamtramck)

Classes are limited to 25 participants. If your name is not drawn for this session, your information will be kept on file for the next available session according to your shift.

*Complete the information below and return to Union Hall
NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 7, 2021.*

Name: _____

GMIN: _____ Seniority: _____

Department: _____ Shift: _____

Phone No: _____

Email: _____

RECORDING SECRETARY REPORT

by Judy Mosier



addicted of their lives, lives that were so full of promise and potential. Those left behind feel victimized and helpless, as they also lost vast pieces of their own life. Futures are gone forever because of these

that families and friends feel remembering those who have died or had a permanent injury as a result of an overdose.

The program will begin with a celebration of life. They will close out the evening with a prayer, reading of names, candlelight vigil, and a moment of silence to represent the one life we lose to overdose every five minutes in the United States. They are also hoping to bring awareness to the programs and services currently available to assist individuals and families who are still struggling with mental health or the consequences of substance misuse.

Naloxone/Narcan trainers from partnering organizations will be present to distribute life-saving overdose reversal kits.

Anyone who wants to attend can bring a photo of their loved one, or a copy for the Community Memorial Art Project. Participants will glue their photo down to the canvas, and then will draw a picture of their favorite memory or write something special about that person. This will be a photo mosaic with a personal touch and will become a moving art piece for sponsoring partners to use at events or programming, as they try to bring hope for a better future through these combined efforts.

Be Safe and God Bless...

Sorrow knows no depths as we consider the preciousness of the life lost and the cruelty of the addiction.

– KAREN BARBER

Overdose Awareness Day

July and August have been exciting months, as we were able to start back with some of our membership activities

In July, our Work/Family M.O.S.T. group hosted Soberfest. As always, they did an outstanding job.

We were also able to have a picnic for our retirees at Union City Fields. It was a beautiful day, and we had a special guest show up to join us. Sheriff Chris Swanson came out and drew the winners from the retiree's Eye Opener Puzzle.

The retiree Golf Outing at Fenton Farms was postponed until August 27th, due to property damage from a storm on August 11th. We appreciate all of the hours that Janet Woodson and Thurman Ross devote to our retirees.

Also, a special thank you to our Retiree Executive Board for always being there to help and support Janet and the retirees. We are so blessed to work with this great group of people.

The *Lois Craig Run for Special Olympics* will be held on Friday, August 27th. Our responsibilities have increased this year, so I ask as many as possible to come out and help us to help them. We will meet at 4:00 p.m. at University Pavilion, across from the flat lot on Saginaw Street in downtown Flint.

I'm pleased to inform you of a new event downtown that the Genesee County Prevention Coalition is hosting. Flint's First Annual Overdose Awareness Day will take place on August 31st, at Riverbank Park from 6:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m.

I lost my nephew two years ago to a drug overdose, and this drug crisis has forever changed the lives of my family members, and so many members from our Local and our communities.

According to the American Society of Addiction Medicine, opioids such as heroin are the "leading cause of accidental death in the United States." It robs the

vicious addictions.

North America continues to experience the highest drug-related mortality rate in the world, accounting for one in four drug-related deaths globally. Although this is the first event for Genesee County, it is also a global event that aims to raise awareness of overdose and reduce the stigma of a drug-related death.

It also acknowledges the grief



OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY Celebration of Life and Candlelight Vigil

AUGUST 31ST, 2021
6:30PM-8:30PM

RIVERBANK PARK DOWNTOWN FLINT
328 SAGINAW ST. FLINT, MI 48502

Please join the Genesee County Prevention Coalition and our partnering agencies below, for a FREE, family friendly public gathering of education, remembrance and hope.

DJ Tomás Tello - Community Resources - Naloxone Training

For questions please contact:

Leah Johnson - Americorps VISTA Opioid Response
Genesee County Prevention Coalition
Ljohnson@theGCPC.org
810-247-3738



New Paths, Inc.



*Sponsorships Available

Please bring a copy of a photo of your loved one for our community memorial art piece





RETIREE REPORT

by Janet Woodson, Retiree Chair

Retirees Cook-out a Success

Hello Retirees,

Our cook-out was a tremendous success and we enjoyed our surprise visitor. Sheriff Chris Swanson (pictured below) joined us and even drew our prize raffle winners for us.

We were so disappointed that we had to reschedule our golf outing on the 13th, because of the recent storms. However, we are happy we were able to reschedule that outing for the 27th.

We are anticipating our first official Retiree Membership meeting on Thursday, September 9th, at our Local Union Hall. It is our prayer that all is well with all of you and your families. The Retiree and Active workers Executive Boards are here to help you and, of course, as always, the officers of Local 598. Take care of yourselves and the ones you love.



AUGUST RETIREES

Congratulations!

The Officers, Staff and Members of Local 598 extend our sincerest thank you and congratulations for the many years of dedicated service by these recent retirees. We encourage all newly retired members to join our Retiree Chapter.



Kenneth T. Beede with spouse Nancy

FRICK I.
(August 1, 2021)

MARX, ERIC P.
(August 1, 2021)

DARRELL L.
(August 1, 2021)

REID, RODNEY L.
(August 1, 2021)

CLASSIFIEDS

• SERVICES
• FOR SALES
• FOR RENT

Due to the increased number of want ads/services we are receiving, ads must be submitted monthly and will be run on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Limited to ads/services submitted in a Local 598 member's name only.

SERVICES

Residential Chain Link Fence, installation and repair. Free Estimates, 46 years-experience. Call 810-845-7211.

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TWA Fence, all fences, commercial and residential. Call (810) 691-4454.

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A.R.S. Construction, all roofs. Best material, pricing and workmanship. Licensed, insured, 20 years' experience. Call 866-722-1311.

FOR SALE

Flint Memorial Park Cemetery side-by-side mausoleum crypts, their price \$8,799.00 plus \$299.00 Transfer Fee = \$9,098.00. My price \$6,750.00, you save \$2,348.00, total \$6,750.00. Call 810-347-5485.

* * * * *

Complete Burial Arrangement for two people, includes 2 opening and closing, 2 vaults and 2 burial spaces that are side-by-side at Flint Memorial Park Cemetery, Section BB, close to the office. Asking \$4,300 firm, retails for over \$5,500. Call 810-287-4318.



Notary Services available at the Union Hall

**AVAILABLE TO ALL
UAW LOCAL 598 MEMBERS**

Call Recording Secretary Judy Mosier to schedule an appointment

238-4605, ext. 17



IN MEMORIAM

The Officers, Representatives and members of Local 598 extend their deepest sympathy to the family and friends of our recently deceased members.

- ANDERSON, LUCEAL (RETIRED)
- BARLOW, JR., CHARLES (RETIRED)
- BARRY, KENNETH W. (RETIRED)
- CARRICK, DAVID E. (RETIRED)
- FLOYD, TIMOTHY M. (RETIRED)
- GIBSON, JIMMIE D. (RETIRED)
- HAAG, ERNEST M. (RETIRED)

- HOLCOLM, MARY ANN (RETIRED)
- HOWAY, MICHAEL R. (RETIRED)
- LYTTLE, STEPHEN H. (RETIRED)
- MARTION, CHARLES A. (RETIRED)
- MCKENZIE, GERALD W. (RETIRED)
- MILLER, FREDERICK L. (RETIRED)
- MURDOCK, LAWRENCE C. (RETIRED)
- NUTALL, GWENDOLYN (RETIRED)
- RAY, HAROLD L. (RETIRED)
- SPRINGSTEEN, DONALD C. (RETIRED)
- TOMASEK, MICHAEL W. (ACTIVE)
- VAN NORMAN, DOYLE (RETIRED)

CLASSIFIED AD EYE OPENER

CIRCLE ONE: For Sale Wanted Service Free For Rent Trade Thank You

Limited Ad Please:

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Send ads to: UAW LOCAL 598, EDITOR
G-3293 Van Slyke Rd., Flint, Michigan 48507

Circle one: RETIRED LAID-OFF ACTIVE

Your Name: _____

Dept. No.: _____



RETIREES CELEBRATE Gathering Together AGAIN

with a picnic at Union City Fields,
Wednesday, July 21st

