



**MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

February 12, 2012  
 March 11, 2012  
 April 8, 2012  
 at 10:00 a.m.

# HEADLIGHT

UAW Local 599 Union Hall  
 812 Leith St. • Flint, MI 48505

**(810) 238-1616**  
 TOLL FREE: 1-888-414-2646

VOL. 73 NO. 1

WEBSITE ADDRESS: [www.uaw599.com](http://www.uaw599.com)

USPS #238-260

JANUARY 2012

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### Hall Update

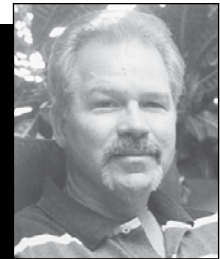
The tentative sale of the Union Hall, as we have informed the membership last month, has ended. The buyer was unable to fulfill the obligation of a down payment. The result of the failed contract was a membership action to hold an auction to liquidate any assets of Local 599 not necessary for the continuation of business. This will include the Union Hall itself, excess furniture, office supplies, electronic equipment, etc.

We presented the actual auction proposal to the members at the meeting, January 8, 2012.

Although we are moving forward with the membership directive to have the auction, we are still searching any avenues that may be available to keep this actual building open, whether it is solely Local 599 or some combination of other Locals or entities.

I feel it is an absolute injustice to all UAW members to allow a building such as this to be sold for pennies on the dollar while at the same time other Locals are looking at remodeling or relocating.

UAW PROPERTY – ILLEGAL TO DUPLICATE



BILL JORDAN

I have spoken with the Regional Director and he feels that it would be a win-win situation if some agreement could be reached among Locals to keep one of the largest and nicest buildings with such historical significance open. It is important to remember that the power to make any such agreements is solely up to each Local's members.

If no alternatives are reached, then it looks as though the auction will take place Saturday, March 17th. Further information and announcements will be made as specifics are set.

### Fact versus Fiction

In the 2007 National Agreement, Local 599 was awarded the Family 0 engine with the promise of 500 to 800 jobs when we reached a schedule of approximately 1,200 engines per day. As time has gone by, that ratio of jobs per schedule has continuously diminished.

**“...we are still searching any avenues that may be available to keep this actual building open...”**

Although the bargaining unit has worked continually on this issue, it looks like the numbers will never come to fruition. Whether it is from work being cut out and shipped to other facilities or simply miscalculations on needed manpower is uncertain. I find it hard to believe that the latter is plausible. Regardless of which, the end result is the same.

Along the same lines of fact or fiction comes the Sonic car. It has been announced that our 1.4 liter engine comes available in the Sonic. Our research shows that it indeed comes in the Sonic, but in only 2 of the 6 available Sonic packages. The foreign-made 1.8 liter comes available in all 6 models.

We are being told that as our volume ability increases, the 1.4 will come available in all models. If the \$500+ million investment in the Mexico-based plant had been made in the United States, then the problem would not exist anyway.

### Cruze, Austrian or U.S. 1.4

If you wonder whether your Cruze

See **PRESIDENT** on Page 2

## SHOP CHAIRMAN REPORT

### Happy New Year & Welcome Back!

We had some tough battles in 2011, but overall it was a productive year. In 2011, we ratified a new Local Agreement that secured some additional work and jobs and also got a new National Agreement.



TERRY EVERMAN

That said, I believe that our single greatest success was getting all our 2007s, all our Skilled Trades, and every Local 599 member with recall rights called back to work.

By the end of the year, we had worked a lot of hours and I, for one, was ready for a break. Many of our members also received an additional week off. Speaking for myself, I feel like I came back to work rested and ready for whatever they want to throw at us in 2012.

This is also the first time I can remember coming back to work after Christmas holidays and not immediately hearing, “Hey, did you hear what happened to so and so?” I hope that means that we had a relatively safe and tragedy free holiday period. Again, welcome back!

### New Hires

Very soon we will see some new faces in the plant. Management is finally going to hire some temporary employees. Like those who were hired in 2006, they will be hired at about half the rate that our current seniority members receive.

One big difference is that even if these temporary employees do become permanent employees, they will not enjoy the same wages and benefits that those hired on October 15, 2007 and prior receive. This is obviously not a good situation, but it is not a new one either. Although this is the first time our location will be in this position, it was actually agreed to

in the 2007 UAW-GM National Agreement when our 2006 temporary workers became permanent employees.

There has been a lot of rumors about what is going on with DDI, the third-party company that management hired to conduct the background checks, screening and interviews for new hires. Apparently, some people are saying that they have received a letter telling them they did not meet the qualifications. Others said that they have not been contacted at all. Some candidates thought the test questions were too vague.

We were able to negotiate the opportunity for our members to each submit one referral. Unfortunately, the union does not have any input on the criteria for selection or the testing of prospective employees.

As of this writing, we are expecting that approximately 20 new members will arrive on Monday, January 9th. Management is playing this very close to their vests. At this point, all they will say is that the process is not complete.

### Skilled Trades

Last week, 23 more Skilled Trades members were added to the Family 0 Maintenance and WFG. These are all members who have been working on the Install/Project crew. Now, they will begin getting the training that other Skilled Trades members received when they came into the Family 0 maintenance group.

The addition of these skilled members will bring us much closer to the number of members required to maintain the Family 0 operations. Unfortunately, we are now shorthanded on our Install/Project crew.

### Suggestion Drawing

On December 14th, we held the Suggestion Program Drawing for the two-year lease of the red Chevy Cruze, powered by a UAW Local 599, Flint built, 1.4 L turbo engine. The winner of the drawing was Bill Anselmi. Bill was able to take delivery of the car in time to have it for the holidays. Congratulations, Bill.

This is the third vehicle that we have given away. I hope we can give another car away in 2012. That, however, will depend on our participation in the Suggestion Program and the amount of the awards. The money used to purchase the 2-year lease came from the Suggestion Program

See **CHAIRMAN** on Page 3

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# HEADLIGHT

The official publication of  
**UAW LOCAL 599**

812 Leith St., Flint, MI 48505

**(810) 238-1616**

**Toll Free: 1-888-414-2646**

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## EDITORIAL POLICY

This paper is the voice of Local 599, the International Union, and Local 599 members. The purpose of this paper is to inform and educate the membership of issues of the Local Union and the community in which we live.

Articles from members and stories about members are welcome. While your contributions are welcome, they should be constructive. At no time shall the Editor tolerate any defamatory remarks regarding policies of the Local Union, the International Union, or any UAW person or persons.

The Editor reserves the right to edit any article for clarity and/or length. Opinions reflected in signed articles do not necessarily reflect the position or opinions of Local 599.

## ADDRESS CHANGES

Postmaster – Send address changes to:  
**Headlight, UAW Local 599**  
812 Leith St.  
Flint, MI 48505-4512

Members with address changes need to send address changes and old mailing label to the above address or call, ext. 10, with the change. Also, call Arlene if you are receiving more than one paper and want to cut it to one.

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[www.uaw599.com](http://www.uaw599.com)

## RECORDING SECRETARY

### REPORT

#### The Future of The *Headlight*

We are sad to report that the regular schedule of the *Headlight* is about to change.



MIKE KEELER

Due to our finances, at the December 2011 membership meeting a motion passed to bring out the By-laws Committee to change the schedule of the newspaper from once a month. The motion asked for the *Headlight* to be printed on an as-needed basis to be approved by the Executive Board.

We also are in discussions with the publisher to determine the frequency that will allow us to get the discounts for the advertising contracts and to maintain our discounts through the bulk-mailing permit.

The *Headlight* is an important tool to inform and educate our members. However, the general fund for the Hall will be close to zero in a couple of months.

But even though our backs are against the wall financially, we are working as hard as we can to get another Local into the Hall, which could be a boost to our financial situation.

Thanks to the Retirees Chapter for stepping up and contributing to the newspaper expenses over the past year. This has helped our general fund and kept the newspaper in publication longer than it would have without their support.

Some members are sending in money for subscriptions to the paper for 2012. The President has ordered the hall secretary to hold these checks in the safe and to not cash them right now. Depending on the outcome of the Bylaw proposal, the checks are likely to be shredded; those members will be notified in the next issue of the *Headlight*, likely in March. The next issue also will provide more details on the future of the newspaper and the outcome of the Hall.

These are uncertain times for the Hall, but my hope is that when the situation stabilizes, we will be able to return to a monthly publishing schedule. We are still going to be Local 599, and we all agree it is important to have an effective way to communicate with our members.

#### Who Supports Occupy?

*Parade* magazine published an amazing report in December about who supports the Occupy Wall Street movement. Conservative news networks have been dismissing the protestors as bunch of young hippies who have nothing better to do and have no real ideas.

#### Here are the stats:

- 23.5% are under 25
- 44.5% are 25-44
- 32% are over 45
- 70.2% are Independents
- 27.4% are Democrats
- 2.4% are Republicans

These statistics were measured by Baruch College as of October 21-22, 2011.

#### If you need assistance

The days I am in the office can change weekly, so if you need assistance, call to find out when I will be in each week. My number is (810) 238-1616, ext. 15.

## PRESIDENT *from Front Page*

comes with an American 1.4 or the Austrian engine, there is a simple visual check. Open the hood and flip up the plastic cover on the engine. If you see a bar code sticker that starts with the number "5," the engine is Austrian made. The American engine has no such bar code.

Even though some windows stickers claim American engines, the stickers are not always correct.

#### Local 599 *Headlight*

Under direction from the membership, the publication frequency of the *Headlight* is again changing. The exact details will be set during the February membership meeting. The meeting will be held February 12th at 10:00 a.m.

#### Legacy Costs

Communication has been sent to the unit representing our staff concerning the legacy costs for Local 599 to the OPIEU. This is a mandatory step in reviewing the expenses we incur each month such as health care, dental, vision care, pensions and Medicare reimbursement.

This is something that we have attempted to avoid as long as possible, but inevitably has come to the forefront. We are not sure if anything will change, but we must take the proper steps if they do. Hopefully, we will be able to continue the benefit programs currently in place.

#### Elections

If you are one of the American working middle class and you have not learned from the last election how important it is to vote, then I guess you are totally out of touch with reality.

Less than 50% of Michiganders voted in the last election cycle. Look at the end results. Our current Governor and his GOP group have done everything imaginable to take what we, as the working middle class, have earned. Taxes on pensions, removal of bargaining rights, Emergency Financial Managers, rolling back health and safety laws, and workers compensation rule changes to benefit large corporations are just some of the heartaches he has caused.

Rather than look at any one single issues that you may feel strongly about, I suggest that people grasp the broad picture of what is best for them as a whole. Single-issue voting or not voting altogether because of apathy or anger has put us where we are today. *Get educated, get involved!*

**CHAIRMAN** from Front Page

Involvement Fund. The plant is given an amount equal to 5% of the total amount of Suggestion Program awards paid out to our members during the year.

The fund is supposed to be used to promote the Suggestion Program and to increase participation.

In 2011, our members were paid a total of \$182,000 in Suggestion Program awards. That earned our Involvement Fund about \$9,100. The lease on the Cruze cost us just under \$7,000. In the next month, we'll be drawing again for some other prizes that will be purchased with the remaining \$2,100. Watch the in-plant newsletter for details.

**Profit Sharing and Special Payments for 2012**

According to the 2011 UAW-GM National Agreement, in March 2012 our active members will receive a Profit Sharing payment of at least \$3,500. In May 2012, we are supposed to receive a \$1,000 "Lump Sum Inflation Protection" payment. We will also be eligible for another Quality Bonus in December 2012, if we meet our national quality targets.

The Quality Bonus is not an automatic annual payment. It is paid when we successfully hit certain quality objectives. Under this program, we received \$250 in December 2011. So far, the quality at Family 0 and GM quality overall have been outstanding. Keep up the good work.

**Special Attrition Program (SAP)**

In the end, 17 Skilled Trades members chose to retire on or before April 1, 2012 in order to qualify for the special Skilled Trades SAP. Any members, Production or Skilled Trades, who take a standard retirement in the next two years will receive a \$10,000 bonus as part of a SAP

that was negotiated in the 2011 UAW-GM National Agreement.

Several production members have already retired and claimed their \$10,000 incentive.

**Red Shirt Wednesdays**

A couple of weeks ago, President Obama and the Democrats in congress literally had to shame the Republicans in Congress into extending the "Obama Payroll Tax Holiday" that would have otherwise expired at the end of 2011.

The Payroll Tax "Holiday" Cut was championed by President Obama and the Democrats a couple of years ago, as a way to help stimulate the economy. Had conservatives been successful in blocking passage of the extension, our members' paychecks would have shrunk by about \$50 per week, beginning January 1, 2012.

I am proud to say that every single Democrat in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate voted for the extension of the Obama Payroll Tax Cut. Ironically, the conservatives/Republicans who fought the hardest to defeat the extension of the Obama Payroll Tax Cut are the same ones who have fought the hardest to keep the 2002 Bush Tax Cuts for millionaires and billionaires in place for the wealthiest 1%.

This year, wealthy corporations and the richest 1% will spend hundreds of millions of dollars to try to influence who will lead our government, set policy and write the laws. Much of that money will fund false and misleading ads aimed at trying to get working people to vote against their own economic interests. There will be lots of negative ads that will try to confuse voters and discourage working people from voting at all.

By the time November rolls around, most of us will be sick of the entire process.

The 1% counts on this. Nonetheless, we need to get to the polls and vote or be willing to accept the crumbs that the 1% leaves for us.

Why do I wear a red shirt every Wednesday? To remind myself and to tell others which side I am on. I will never be in the wealthiest 1% and I am tired of subsidizing their extravagant lifestyles. This year, I am going to put a \$50 bill in my wallet and leave it there to remind myself that every week there is \$50 more in my wallet, mostly because there is a Democrat in the White House.

It warms my heart to see so many of our members wearing their red shirts every Wednesday. As I walked around on 2nd shift the other day, it seemed like nearly everyone was wearing a red shirt. Thank you to those who are participating. If you have not yet joined us, please consider doing so.

**Health & Safety and Heat**

Now that cold weather is here, we are finding out where there is still a problem with the proper distribution of heat in the plant. The committee body is working to resolve these issues when brought to their attention. There are serious safety concerns when our members try to do their jobs in coats.

**MAXIMO**

Please use the MAXIMO system. All maintenance jobs should be assigned using the MAXIMO system. As far as management is concerned, if it isn't in MAXIMO, it didn't happen. We have set up a computer lab in Trailer #4 and Dominic Zsigo has been teaching those who need to use the system how to enter jobs, order parts and complete PMs using MAXIMO.

If you feel that you need some training in the MAXIMO system, tell your team leader and your supervisor that you want

in the class.

**Old Newsboys**

The Old Newsboys campaign was very successful. Many members gave significant contributions. In all, we averaged about \$20 for every member working here, which happens to be what it costs to sponsor a child.

The Old Newsboys is truly a blue ribbon, local organization. I am proud of our membership for their outstanding generosity. Thank you to all those who gave and to those who worked on the campaign.

If you are interested in an easy way of supporting the Old Newsboys through the coming year, there are several containers throughout the plant where you can put your returnable bottles and cans. Rather than throwing them away or carting them home, you can contribute them. All the money realized from the deposits on the bottles and cans placed in the containers benefit the Old Newsboys.

**Seniority Report**

Following is the manpower count as of January 6, 2012. You can also check the Chairman's Report on the [www.uaw599.com](http://www.uaw599.com) website periodically for updates.

Total Active.....	461*
Production Active .....	293*
Skilled Trades Active .....	168*
Total Working.....	402
Production Working .....	241
Total Skilled Trades Working.....	161
Production on Permanent Layoff...	0
Skilled Trades on	
Permanent Layoff .....	0
Production on Temporary Layoff ...	26
Skilled Trades on	
Temporary Layoff .....	2

The level date for production at Family 0 is now 10/15/07.

*\*includes sick leave, extended disability, workers comp, and temporary layoff*

## FINANCIAL SECRETARY

REPORT

### We Are Survivors

Welcome to 2012, Brothers and Sisters. Many changes will be taking place; some good, some maybe not so good. But we are survivors, as the 1937 Sit-downers were. We will strive to make the best of our situation. We need our members, active and retired, to pull together to support and help our leadership take a positive direction.

The good news was many active members returned to our site in 2011 and the production of our new work is going well. Not so good news, many of our retirees felt the "hit" on their pension check this month as the Michigan tax kicked in.

We must work hard to get these politicians out of office who sit around trying to figure out new ways to "rob" the middle class.

So, some more good news...A huge thank you to our members who participated in the 2011 Old Newsboys campaign. Even through such difficult times for all of us, many were very generous.



BARB YOUNG

From the active members' activities of hot dog and popcorn sales, raffles, and fifty-fifties, along with the sponsorship of children through the donations from the retirees at the Christmas dinners in December and the volunteers who showed up December 9, 2011 to collect from street corners on the Old Newsboys paper drive, which by the way was one of the first, coldest, snowy days of the holiday season, our good membership collected a total of \$11,153.20 for the campaign.

We want to thank all who did their part and especially Sister Gertie Covey, who coordinated the Old Newsboys donations at the Retiree Christmas dinners.

We are blessed to have what we have and need to share our good fortune with those less fortunate. United we stand, divided we fall.

### SOME IMPORTANT DATES

- **Retiree BINGO**  
January 19, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.
- **Retiree Chapter Meeting**  
January 25, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.
- **White Shirt Day**, Local 651, Flint  
February 10, 2012
- **Regular Membership Meeting**  
February 12, 2012
- **Retiree BINGO**  
February 16, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.
- **Retiree Chapter Meeting**  
February 29, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.

## 75th Anniversary of the 1937 Sit-Down Strike Wave Remembering Another Occupy

By Don Fitz

The year 2012 marks the 75th anniversary of the great sit-down strike wave of 1937. It also begins the second year of the Occupy movement, which has more than a few similarities to the time when hundreds of thousands of Americans occupied their workplaces.

### Sit-downs from 1906-1936

The first recorded sit-down in the US was actually in 1906 among General Electric workers of Schenectady, New York. When three organizers for the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW or Wobblies) were fired, 3,000 of their fellow workers sat down and stopped production. By the 1930s, the IWW was on the wane, but many of its organizers were active and workers across the US had seen its tactics first hand.

In 1933, workers in the Austin, Minnesota Hormel plant had many complaints against the company: raises habitually went to foremen's friends; workers were fired and then rehired in other departments at lower pay; before election day, foremen would threaten layoffs if Farmer-Labor Party candidates won, and employees who challenged the practices were told that they could quit. The final straw came when Jay Hormel, who fancied himself to be a "benevolent dictator," attempted to impose a weekly paycheck deduction for an insurance plan.

When a man in Hog Kill was pressured to sign up, other workers shut down the floor for 10 minutes, until his insurance card was torn up. News of the brief sit-down spread throughout the plant. That July night, workers met at Austin's Sutton Park to form a union.

The union charter followed the IWW pattern of grouping all workers into one big union regardless of craft. It invited membership from laborers throughout Austin and the surrounding area. They named themselves the Independent Union of All Workers (IUAW).

Jay Hormel promised to recognize the union, grant seniority rights, and arbitrate grievances. But, for six weeks, Hormel refused to put anything in writing, and, on November 10th, workers voted to strike. Farmer-Laborite Governor Olson made public speeches backing the strikers while he secretly mobilized National Guardsmen 30 miles from Austin.

Support for the strike was overwhelming. Since the IUAW had endorsed farmers' efforts to raise their prices, the Farmers' Holiday Association patrolled roads leading into Austin to halt livestock and scabs. Strikers occupied the plant, and, as Stan Weir told the story, "Food, bedding, cigarettes, reading material and playing cards were brought to them by family and friends. They came out of the plant several days later with one of the first industrial union contracts in mass production history."

The best-known early sit-down strikes were in Ohio. Jeremy Brecher described

their humble beginnings in his book *Strike!* Sometime in the early 1930s, two factory baseball teams in Akron, Ohio objected to the umpire because he was not in the union. They stopped playing and sat in the field until a new umpire was found.

A few days later, a supervisor at a rubber factory insulted several workers. Remembering the ball game, they turned off their machines and sat at their work benches. The work stoppage spread throughout the plant and, in less than an hour, the company had given in. Between 1933 and 1936, the practice of sit-downs grew among Akron rubber workers.

In January 1936, Firestone announced a rate reduction and fired a union committeeman. Workers in one area after another halted production and sat down. The company gave in on both issues. The Great Goodyear Strike began in February 1936 when 700 workers were laid off.

Though hundreds of workers held a sit-down, officers from the United Rubber Workers (URW) persuaded them to leave. Goodyear, President Roosevelt and URW officials all tried to convince them to return to work and submit their grievances to arbitration. Instead, the Goodyear workers held out for a month and won. Since union recognition had not been established, the rubber workers enforced the agreement by dozens of sit-downs during the rest of 1936.

### The Sit-Down in Flint

During the early 1930s, resentment over speed-up and lack of freedom at work was rampant among auto workers. Sit-downs at Fisher Body Plants in Cleveland and Detroit caught the owners totally unprepared. When two welders were laid off at a plant in Flint, Michigan, the sit-downers were so unified that Fisher management persuaded cops to drive all over town to tell the welders that they got their jobs back so other workers would start production again.

On December 30, 1936, workers at Fisher Body No. 1 in Flint discovered that the company was stockpiling dies (to outlast an expected strike) and occupied the plant. For several weeks, they governed themselves in their own committees that were a model of democracy unknown in the official union structure. When cops tried to stop supporters from bringing food into the plant, a fight of several hours resulted in the strikers chasing them off.

On January 11, 1937, the liberal New Deal Governor Murphy ordered the National Guard into Flint. Thousands of industrial unionists poured into Flint to protect the sit-downers by preventing the "friend of labor" politician from using the Guard. This began the great wave of 1937 sit-down strikes.

### Strikes across the country

By the time General Motors signed its first contract with the United Auto Work-

See OCCUPY on page 8

## CLASSIFIEDS

Members may submit one ad, 12 words or less, every month by 10:00 a.m. the Thursday prior to publication - No ads by phone. Give your name and factory or if retired.

**ATTENTION: The Classified Ad section of the Headlight ceased to list foreign-made trucks, cars and motorcycles that are for sale.**

### SERVICES

**Painting**, 20 years experience, discount for all Local 599 people and friends, free estimates. Call Larry Cheney at 810-238-5591.

**Carpenter**, remodeling and home repairs. Call Ray at 810-234-5507.

**Moving and Hauling** by mature and honest crew. Local pick-up and drop-off special, \$35.00. Other services available. Senior discount. Call T.J. at 810-569-7665.

**Appliance, A/C and Heating Repair**, Low rates, senior discount, all work guaranteed, \$25.00 service call. Call Scott, 810-655-5041.

**Handy Mike**, repair or remodel kitchens, flooring, painting and drywall, GM discount. Call Mike at 810-618-0915.

**Tree Trim and Removal**, with complete clean-up and stump grind the wood for sale. Senior and UAW discounts. Call 810-931-5072 or 810-444-4069.

**Retired Licensed Electrician**, serving all your electrical needs. Call Dana Craig at 810-691-8668.

### FOR RENT

**2 Houses**, one has 2 BRs, large lot, fenced yard, carport; one has 3 BRs, family room, 3 baths, 2 car att'd garage, fireplace, central air, alarm system, large lot, fenced yard. Call 810-787-1705.

### FOR SALE

**Snowblower**, \$150.00. Call Melvin at 810-732-2871.

**2002 Trailgator Toy Hauler**, 21 ft., 14 KW Omen generator. Great shape! Call 810-919-1555.

**Electric Stove**, \$80; Snapper lawn tractor, used very little, and a 1997 Lund boat/185 Grand Sport, with 2 motors, a 115 Maran Outboard Motor and a small 15 horsepower motor, all (boat & motors) for \$7,500. Call 810-787-1705.

**2 Crypts** in Garden of Prayer, Flint Memorial Park, \$4,500 value will sell for \$3,200 or best offer. Call 810-653-6814 or 810-444-1493.

**Original GM Hood Lifts**, 2000-06, GMC Sierra, Yukon, Denali, \$100. Call 810-869-7267.

**14'x50' Mobile Home**, Briny Breezes, FL, located in Boynton Beach, between Atlantic Ocean and intra-coastal. Community pool, cable TV, woodworking shop, shuffleboard court, 800' of perfect private ocean beach with clubhouse, on Intracoastal canal, painted & updated, new ceramic tile, new Pergo flooring, W/D, AC, lawn sprinkler and covered patio. Existing deck and dock for boat. All furnishings, \$198,000. Call Rick or Craig at (810) 750-6011 or visit <http://briny-breezes-fl.com>

### WANTED

**Deer Rifle**, 30.06 automatic, 270 automatic, and a 22 pistol. Call 810-687-4917 or 810-210-9170.

**Buick Collectables**, rings, watches, badges, pins, retirement awards, lighters, etc. Ask for Abby at 810-240-5438.

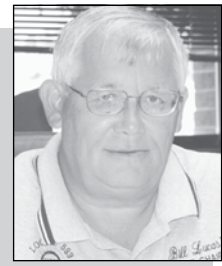
# RETIREE CHAIRMAN REPORT

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

Hope your holidays were good, the Christmas dinners were well attended and we enjoyed the fellowship and food.

Many changes are expected this year for our membership and we intend on informing everyone as soon as we can. I'm speaking mainly about the Local Union Hall and what may happen to us and the Hall.

We are very proud of this Chapter for their generosity with donations to Toys-for-Tots, Old Newsboys, St. Francis Prayer Center, Salvation Army, Dort Hwy., St. Michael's Church Breakfast program, food donation to Salvation Army, Coldwater Road, Food Bank of Eastern Michigan and the many other organizations that we helped.



BILL LUCAS

On the political front, Mitt Romney and Rick Santorum were able to muster one quarter each in the Iowa caucuses. It means seventy-five percent of the Republicans opted not to vote for either one of them. The results forced Michele Bachmann to drop out of the race. Rick Perry, Ron Paul, and Newt Gingrich didn't do well at all, but continue their campaigning at a great cost. All of these candidates have a political agenda that is not good for the working class people of this country.

As a Chapter Chairman of Local 599, I get calls every day on our pensions, benefits, or loss of contract items, so I know what these have done to our retirees. I'm still frustrated because we have been talking, warning folks about what would happen to them if we allow these people to get into office. I hope our people will now listen to us when we tell them that these Republicans want to do away with us as a middle class.

You can tell by their votes that their own party is unsure of them. You know, Republicans have pensions and they are part of the middle class and pay taxes, too.

We need to turn this around!!!

Local 599 Benefit Reps. Adolphus and Ed, Masonic Labor Temple #517, White Horse Tavern, Riverfront Optical & Hearing, Bonnie Smith at Creative Financial Centre, Special Game sponsor Brother Jamie Curtis, and our friends at Security Credit Union, who have sponsored the cover-all game from the start, almost four years ago.

In closing, please read our retiree articles for important dates about upcoming events. From the Retiree E-Board, have a very happy and fulfilling new year!

### Humor For This Month

A drunk walks into the bar crying. One of the other men asked him what happened. "I did a horrible thing," cried the drunk. "Just a few hours ago, I sold my wife to someone for a bottle of Scotch."

"That is awful," said the other man. "And now you want her back, right?"

"Right," said the drunk. "You're sorry you sold her because you see too late that you love her too much, right?" said the other man. "Oh, no," said the drunk. "I want her back because I'm thirsty again!"

# RETIREES CHAPTER REPORT

### How-Dee!

Yes, I'm still here and it looks like I'm going to be here for most of the winter. I guess if the weather stays this warm, I should be able to handle it.

Now that the holidays are over, I hope you all had a great Christmas and got everything from Santa that you asked for. My wife didn't get anything for Christmas. I told her in November that when I got my Christmas bonus, I'd buy her a Christmas present. Oh, well. Thanks, GM!

I was contacted by the officers of the Vassar Eagles wanting to thank all of the Local 599 retirees for the donations for the Vassar Christmas Baskets for those in need in the Vassar and Millington communities. With all of the businesses closing, there were a lot of families who were really in need of help.

The Vassar Eagle committees did 50/50s, raffles, and took donations to collect enough funds to take 35 children (ages 6 months to 14) to the local bowling alley, owned by Bill Stander, so they could have their picture with Santa Claus. Then, each child got a Christmas present and the older children got to bowl a game.

When it came time to leave, some cried because they didn't want to leave. They asked if they could come back next year.

The Eagle committees packed up 15 holiday food baskets for families in need with hams, potatoes, vegetables, bread, fruits and desserts - all the trimmings for a good dinner. Each child in the family also got a Christmas present. The committees even delivered the baskets. It felt good to



JOHN BISHOP

help and see the looks on their faces when those baskets were handed to them!

Another year and a job well done with help of the Local 599 retirees. It was very successful and a lot of families had a wonderful and very happy Christmas.

The Local 599 Retirees Christmas dinners went over real well. We had some wonderful guests who sang real good for their dinners. Former Retiree Representative Sister Becky Sullivan attended. She looked good and now is retired, like us. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and it was good to see some old friends whom I haven't seen in a long time. It's funny how fast time flies when you are apart from friends and family.

I'm sure everyone has made their New Year's resolutions for 2012, and all you need to do is line them up and hope they come true. It's a new year, and I hope you are ready for it. With any luck, we'll still have a place for Chapter meetings.

Don't forget the January 25, 2012 Retiree Chapter meeting is when we will vote on the three outings for the retirees this year. Please show up at the meeting and have some input with your ideas for the outings. Everyone has a right to suggest and vote for these events.

Well, guess I'd better close for now.

If they don't close the printing of the *Headlight*, maybe I'll get another article in next month. I will inform on all of the events voted on. If the paper does shut down, don't forget the Chapter has been paying for the mailing to members for the past few months.

To contact the Chapter room, call 810-238-1616, ext. 29. Please leave a message and speak clearly, with your name, phone number and a short message, so someone can call you back. Most days, someone is there on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon.

I hope you have a warm winter. Put your snowmobiles up and get out the bass boats!

# 2ND VICE-CHAIRMAN

## RETIREES REPORT

BY JERRY LINK

### Greetings to All Retirees

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and got everything they wanted. From Kathy and myself, we hope you have a happy and joyous new year.

We had a good year for Retiree BINGO. We averaged about 60 to 65 players each month with a good lunch, raffle prizes donated, and no cost to the Chapter. The next BINGO will be January 19, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. If there is not another edition of the *Headlight*, the BINGO in February will be February 16, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. After that, we are not sure of our situation at the Union Hall. Please read Sister Barb Young's article for important dates and other information.

The BINGO Committee would like to thank all the sponsors, the Penny Fund, Local 599 Retirees E-Board members,

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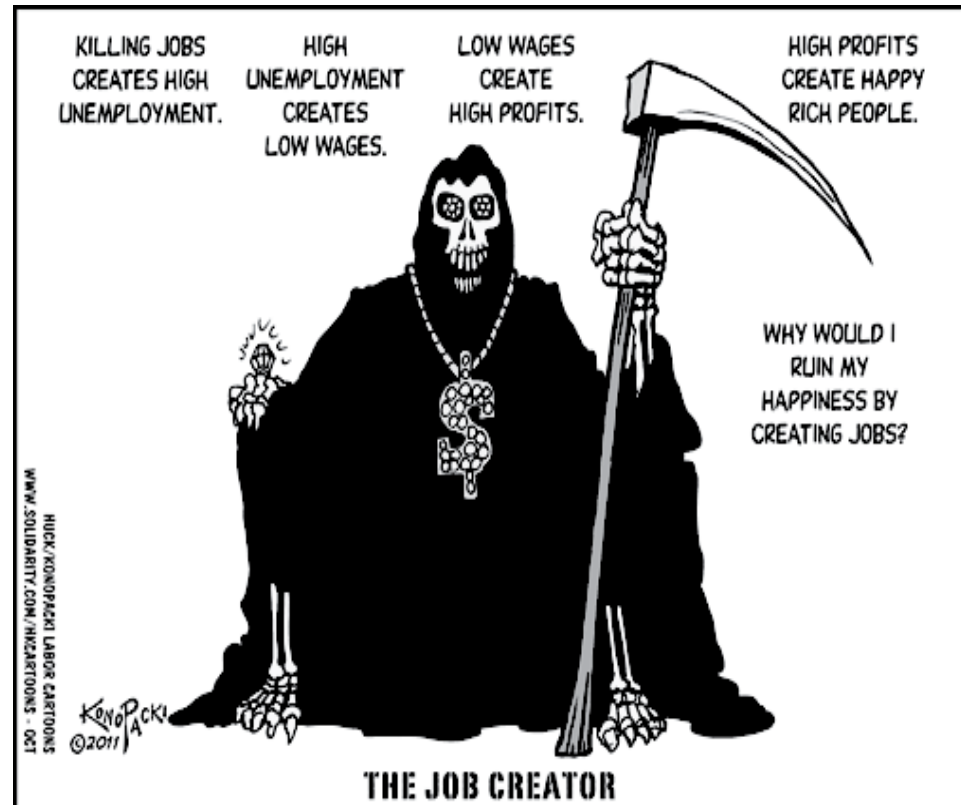
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## OCCUPY from Page 4

ers (UAW), nearly 50,000 workers had just been involved in strikes inside their plants. There were 60 sit-down strikes in Chicago in the month of March alone. The 1,800 blue collar and white collar workers who sat down together at the Chicago Mail Order Co. won a 10% pay increase. And the 450 waitresses and other employees who sat at the tables of Chicago's three large de Met's Tea Room won a 25% wage hike.

When the mayor of Amsterdam, New York tried to hire a private firm to replace garbage men who were sitting at their trucks, the strikers convinced their "replacements" not to scab. Women at a Philadelphia hosiery mill halted the movement of machinery by sitting down.

In Milwaukee, the manager of Yahr Lange Drug Co. had the nasty habit of firing workers when their seniority earned them a raise. So, they sat down and radioed salesmen, who pulled their cars over and sat in them until the manager had been removed. There were thousands of strikes varying from a handful of workers to massive organizing efforts. Altogether, these strikes involved close to half a million Americans sitting down at their jobs.

The tactic made famous by rubber and auto workers was especially popular in Detroit. Employees at the Newton Packing Co. and Durable Laundry oc-

cupied their workplaces. Clerks sat down at Crowley-Milner and Frand & Cedar Dept. Stores. And, there were sit-downs at hotels, lumberyards, tobacco plants, and electrical factories.

Motormen on Chicago freight subways sat down when their employer announced layoffs. Sit-down strikes included furniture workers in St. Louis, shirt company employees in Pulaski, Tennessee, leather workers in Girard, Ohio, broom manufacturing workers in Pueblo, Colorado, and oil workers in Seminole, Oklahoma. Department stores were particularly prone to sit-downs because employees could be replaced so easily in regular strikes. In Pittsburgh, C.G. Murphy store employees had a "folded arms" strike when they found no chairs available for a sit-down.

Sit-downs were successful even though unions had just been decimated by the Great Depression. They often occurred in shops where unions were weak. Workers at Yahr Lange Drug Co. had rejected unionization shortly before their sit-down. In 1934, union membership among Flint auto workers was only 528. The 137 tire builders who began the Great Goodyear Strike of 1936 with their sit-down included hardly any member of the rubber workers union.

In fact, sit-downs sometimes occurred because people distrusted union officials. Workers were frequently angry at delays in grievance procedures and the lack of

attention to workplace demands. Since sit-downs are direct action by the people who see an injustice, there is no one to sell out the agreement. With a sit-down, workers do not go back to work until people are rehired, the workload is reduced to a human pace, dangerous chemicals are removed, sexual discrimination is stopped, or wages are restored.

### Why sit-downs worked

"Normal" strikes involve unions' giving management weeks or months of advance notice, which allows the company time to stockpile goods or otherwise prepare to defeat the strike. But both management and union leaders are caught unprepared by sit-downs. Management must respond quickly because the action brings production to a grinding halt. Workers then have tremendous leverage. Since they are occupying their place of work, it is extremely difficult for management to find scabs to replace sit-downers.

If you ask "Why did sit-downs come to a halt in the US?" you may hear that it was because a Supreme Court ruling made them illegal. Though on February 27, 1939, the Court ruled that sit-downs violated property owner rights, the ruling had little to do with the decline of sit-down strikes. For centuries, merely being in a union and taking any job action was illegal. If unions had never been willing to do anything illegal, they never would have come into existence.

As Brecher observes in *Strike!*, court injunctions were used repeatedly against sit-downers during 1937. In other words, sit-downs were already illegal when they happened. And labor actions since the great sit-down wave have been won, despite being "illegal." The most notable is the postal wildcat strike of March 1970. Though striking against the government is a felony, which can result in a year in jail, over 200,000 postal workers in 15 states joined strikers in New York City. Their action forced Congress to grant them a 24% wage increase.

It was repeated hostility by union officials that threw ice water on the sit-down movement. Union officials tend to want arbitration and negotiated settlements, which give them a place at the table without taking personal risks. Throughout 1937, many union officials urged workers not to sit-down or to end strikes after they began. After 1937, collaboration between employers and union higher-ups increased.

### Sit-downs 1950s-present

Nevertheless, the idea of sitting down has inspired generations of activists for three quarters of a century. Beginning in the late 1950s, civil rights marchers recalled the labor tactic as they held sit-ins against racism at lunch counters throughout the South. During the height of US attacks on Vietnam in the late 1960s, hundreds of thousands of

students sat-in at administration offices to protest their complicity with militarism. By the late 1970s, hardly a month went by without a sit-in to call attention to the destructive effects of nuclear power or other ecological catastrophes.

Labor has not forgotten the tactic. During the 1968 upheavals in France, many workers struck by occupying their workplaces. In the first decade of this century, there have been worker occupations in Canada, South Africa, England, France, Spain and Turkey. The most intense have been in Argentina.

With the financial crisis of 2001, one business after another looked like it would close and workers responded by taking over many of them. Moreover, they kept the companies running. According to Marie Trigona, 250 worker-occupied enterprises have employed over 13,000 people. This has led Argentina to have some of the lengthiest recent experiences of worker management. Trigona believes that "the recuperated enterprises confirm that businesses don't need bosses to produce." For example, at the Zanon ceramics factory, workers hold general assemblies to make decisions about production.

The sit-down occupation best known to Americans was at Republic Windows and Doors in December 2008. With construction business down, the Chicago company gave its over 200 workers three days to clear out. Instead, the members of UE Local 1100 took over the plant and groups of 30 kept it occupied so management could not move out its expensive machinery. After six days, they won.

Occupy Wall Street can trace itself to a great tradition which began in the US, spread across the globe in one movement after another, and returned to the US in 2011, only to go global again. When people sit down at work, at a lunch counter, at school, or in a park, they realize that they themselves have the power to collectively take back control of their lives from the 1%.

*Don Fitz is on the coordinating committee of the Greens/Green Party USA and produces Green Time TV in St. Louis, Missouri. He can be reached at fitzdon@aol.com.*

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BUICK VERANO  
CADILLAC CTS  
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CHEVROLET VOLT  
CHRYSLER 200  
CHRYSLER 200 CONVERTIBLE  
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DODGE CALIBER  
FORD FOCUS  
FORD MUSTANG  
FORD TAURUS  
LINCOLN MKS  
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CADILLAC ESCALADE/HYBRID  
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CHEVROLET TAHOE /HYBRID  
CHEVROLET TRAVERSE  
DODGE DURANGO  
FORD ESCAPE/HYBRID  
FORD EXPEDITION  
FORD EXPLORER  
GMC ACADIA  
GMC YUKON/HYBRID  
GMC YUKON XL  
JEEP COMPASS  
JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE  
JEEP LIBERTY  
JEEP PATRIOT  
JEEP WRANGLER  
LINCOLN NAVIGATOR

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CHEVROLET SILVERADO/  
HYBRID\*\*  
FORD F SERIES  
GMC CANYON  
GMC SIERRA/HYBRID\*\*  
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### CAW CARS

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DODGE CHARGER

### CAW SUVs/CUVs

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FORD EDGE  
FORD FLEX  
GMC TERRAIN  
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However, those marked with an asterisk (\*) are produced in the United States and another country. The light-duty (LD) crew cab versions of the vehicles marked with a double asterisk (\*\*) are manufactured only in Mexico; other models are made in the United States.

When purchasing one of these models, check the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN). A VIN beginning with "1" or "4" or "5" identifies a U.S.-made vehicle; "2" identifies a Canadian-made vehicle.

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