# Lansing Labor News

#### VOLUME 67, NUMBER 1

**VOICE OF 27,000 UAW MEMBERS** 

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**JANUARY, 2011** 

# Dr. King saw our future

#### By DEAN POGGIALI, President, Local 724

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he

stands at times of challenge and controversy." The late, great Dr. Martin Luther King spoke these words over 45 years ago. Isn't it almost foreshadowing that these same words can apply to the



situation that President Barack Obama is about to tackle with the newly elected House of Representatives and Senate?

It appears as though Dr. King saw the future when he contemplated the dilemma that Americans would face. In the 50's and 60's the civil rights of Americans was a hot button issue with Dr. King leading the fight for equality. In 2011 the right to be civil by some Americans is being seriously challenged.

The Republicans are licking their chops to overturn the health care reform legislation without offering a viable solution to fix the broken system. They clamor for smaller government and want to cut everything to the bone without offering a safety net for those who have fallen on difficult times, like those on unemployment. For those of us on unemployment or who have been on unemployment, we would rather work than face the specter of foreclosure, eviction, hungry children, utility shutoff, and a future of uncertainty.

For the first time in over a decade Michigan is hopeful to add more workers than it loses in 2011. The economy began its downward spiral in 2000. We have lost over 860,000 jobs since that period. If my mind serves me, these years also reflect the Bush Administration. Additionally in 2009 there was a loss of 285,000 jobs. In 2010, after President Obama began to make some corrections, Michigan saw a loss of 34,700 jobs. With a renewed foothold of General Motors, Chrysler, and Ford, 2011 is predicted to add 6,300 more jobs, with the potential in 2012 of more than 48,000

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workers added to the payroll.

As we change our focus, our hat goes off to the Local 724 Women's Committee for the wonderful Christmas party for kids. The stream of kids and their families was steady, with plenty of activities for them as well. They decorated cookies, made trail mix, and made ornaments, to name few of the activities. There was an opportunity to visit Santa and receive a present as well. We look forward to other events the Committee has in the works.

Even though as we pen this, the snow has receded, we know that the throes of winter will continue for months to come. Many of our friends, family, and neighbors will struggle to pay their heating bill. One way to help is by participating in the annual Walk for Warmth put on by the Capital Area Community Services. The 21st annual walk will convene on February 26 at various locations in Clinton, Eaton, Ingham, and Shiawassee counties. You can collect pledges and then walk or donate to someone who is planning to walk. Please either contact me at 517-203-5027 or link to information at http://www.cacsinc.org/Walk4W.htm. 100% of the proceeds from the monies collected go to the program to heat those in need.

In closing we wish to pose the following:

Will the promises made during the 2010 campaign by the right-wing Tea Party be realized or will they just blame someone else for their shortcomings?

It is imperative that all the elected officials, whether Democratic, Independent or Republican, keep in mind what Dr. King uttered all those many years ago: "We must use time creatively ... and forever realize time is always ripe to do right."

As Dr. King so eloquently said to another civil rights activist: "The fight for equality must be fought on many fronts in the urban slums, in the sweatshops of the factories and fields. Our separate struggles are really one—a struggle for freedom, for dignity, and for humanity. You and your valiant fellow workers have demonstrated your commitment to righting grievous wrongs forced upon exploited people." The union movement should take

The union movement should take these words to heart to champion our way of life and become exploited by those who think they have our best interests in mind. By following the words and wisdom of Dr. King and Cesar Chavez, the labor movement can continue to be a force to be reckoned with.

# White Shirt Day

#### By Region 1-C Director Norwood Jewell

Friday, February 11 is White Shirt Day, the anniversary of the Flint Sit-Down Strike, where we celebrate the brave men and women who fought the battles in 1937 resulting in the UAW's first contract with General Motors.

This year's celebration will take place at UAW Local 599 in Flint, beginning at 11:00 a.m. This is also the day we wear a white shirt to work to honor our sitdowners.

And it's also the day we'll draw the winning tickets for the 2010 V-CAP drawings, including the first-place prize—that blue and while Chevrolet Camaro SS you've seen across the region for the last year.



ABOVE: The Local 602 Women's Committee put on a delightful children's Christmas party and sent us photos which we put up on our website. We also have photos there of other locals' parties and activities. www.lansinglabornews.org



For the rest of 2011, the Labor News' official schedule for print issues is: May 1 September 1 December 1 Please make a note of it.

Local 602 Hourly & Salaried Retirees Annual Florida Picnic First Tuesday of March 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Duff's Original Buffet 6010 14th St. W Bradenton, FL (One mile south of Stacey's Buffet, which closed) \$6.00 - \$7.00 per person Questions: Call Larry Miller at 941/746-6968 (home) 941-920-2988 (cell)

Local 724 Nomination & Election Notice on Page 5

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#### LOCAL 602 Brian Fredline, President It's not rocket

Happy New Year to all of our Local 602 members active and retired! 2010 was quite a year, with members from

over 20 different locals across the country joining our Local 602 family. 2011 looks like another busy and successful year as we continue to produce the world's best crossovers on three shifts

science



and we anticipate some scheduled overtime soon. 2011 is also a negotiation year and we are in the process of compiling our membership demands, getting them approved by the General Membership and submitting them to the UAW/GM department for inclusion. GM is healthy again and poised for profit, thanks to the sacrifices of our membership both active and retired. We have shared in the pain; now let's share in the gain!

The labor movement is currently under attack from every angle. Our brothers and sisters who are government and municipal employees are under attack from both state and federal legislators. Management is using a page out of the old playbook stating that whenever their bottom line gets soft and revenues decrease they blame the people and not their process. Rather than eliminate waste in their process, they immediately take money out of our middle-class pockets to pay for their reckless and irresponsible decisions.

It's not our fault that Wall Street was allowed to plunge us into this recession while they continue to make record profits and bonuses. It's not our fault that greedy speculators were allowed to drive the price of oil over \$140 per barrel, making record profits for oil companies and closing factories here at home.

It's not our fault that globalization in the name of "Free Trade Capitalism" has cost our American middle class millions of jobs while corporate America continues to search the globe for the low bidder country. It's not our fault that our retirees' 401k's have been cut in half and their benefit packages have been reduced with the stroke of a pen, while executive pay and bonuses continue their meteoric and immoral rise.

So what do we do now? Believe it or not, that answer is quite simple.

The middle class built the economic foundation of this great nation and now that we are shrinking, so too is the economic "greatness" of America. This ain't rocket science! Rebuild the middle class by creating and protecting goodpaying jobs with benefits here in America. That's it, and that's all.

See how simple that was, and what is the only movement that fights for, advocates for, and helps to create and pro-

Local 602 meetings The next meetings will be February 13, March 13, and April 10. The Executive board meets at 5:30 p.m. The General Membership meets at 7:00 p.m. at the hall. Also please note that our hall hours are now 7 a.m.-4 p.m. M-F. tect middle-class jobs? THE LABOR MOVEMENT! We are not the cause of the problem, we are the only solution.

#### LOCAL 652 Mike Green, President Don't forget us!

Welcome back to everyone. I hope your holiday season went well. The last couple of years have been

filled with a lot of filled with a lot of emotion, with General Motors filing bankruptcy in 2009 and on the way to recovery in 2010. Of course that was with the help of our active and retired members and the fed-

eral government's loans. Without all those circumstances, GM may never have made it.

We're glad GM has been able to pay off their loans from the government early. GM is now asking for approval to pay bonuses to key management people so they don't leave for another company. Well, but let's remember our active workers who all gave concessions in hour pay increases, new starting wage, loss of COLA—all to help ensure medical coverage for our retirees. At the same time, our retirees gave up vision, dental care, and had increases in co-pays to help the VEBA's future.

Contract talks start this year and we have received over 180 resolutions for changes in the local and national agreements. I want everyone to know that we need to remember our active and retired members at the bargaining table, especially since GM has made a great turn-around. We members had a huge hand in this achievement and should be remembered now!

The V-CAP campaign has started in our plants. Thank you in advance for donating. It's very important to maintain our position at the table for working people's political agenda.

### LOCAL 1753 Al Vincent, President Election cycle is starting now

This Sunday, January 16, at 6:00 p.m. Local 1753 will be holding their general membership meeting. This change was brought about because the plant changed the starting time on the afternoon shift to 3:00 p.m. We were hoping this would not work and they would go back to their old time of 4:00 p.m., but they have not. We hope we can run a meeting in a timely fashion and not be rushed.

At this meeting there will be nominations for the Election Committee, reading of some proposed by-laws changes and approval of the National demands submitted by the membership. Get up and mark your calendar RIGHT NOW, while you're thinking about it!

Since the Lansing Labor News is on a limited basis right now, my guess is the next edition will come out in early April. This will be the issue for all the upcoming local elections. It will most likely be the last one before the local elections in May.

I encourage EVERYONE to run for an office. Some offices take more time

than others. If you truly believe in your union, you will run for something. If you are going to run for some office, you CANNOT run for the Election Committee. Or in other words, if you run for the Election Committee you cannot run for a Union office. One or the other. Retirees are eligible to run for ANY office except Committeeperson or Shop Chairperson.

If you are having thoughts about running for some office, but have some questions first, talk to me. If you see me, I will be glad to answer your questions or you can call me at 645-2508. One thing you must do is show your fellow co-workers that you want the job and think you will do a good job at it. Press the flesh. Show up at your Union meetings. Sometimes you have to think outside the box, it worked for me.

My Food for Thought: AMAZING! You hang something in your closet for a while and it shrinks two sizes! The most thoroughly wasted of all days is that on which one has not laughed. A laugh is a smile that burst.

Local 1753 Meeting Notice Executive Board meets at 2:15 p.m. on: February 15 March 15 April 12

General Membership meets at 6:00 p.m. on: February 20

March 20 April 17 All meetings are subject to change upon membership actions.

# ATTENTION GM RETIREES

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#### LOCAL 602 Connie Swander, Fin. Secretary

# Election year for our local

Here we are in 2011. Hopefully we all had great holidays, made some family memories, and are ready to deal with whatever 2011 brings.

This is a General Election year for

Local 602. We need to start thinking about who we want to represent us for the next three years. People have come from all over the country and landed here at 602 with new thoughts. I



would like to see us all come together with new and old ideas to build a better tomorrow, so the people of 602 continue to be employed at a plant we all enjoy working and being a family at.

Many newly retired members don't know they are able to vote in the General Election for anyone who is not part of the Bargaining Committee. As a retiree, you still have a say in how your Local is run. So remember to get out and vote, whether you are active or retired.

Happy New Year to everyone.

#### LOCAL 652 Bob Smith, Financial Secretary Big Three sales increase

The numbers are in for 2010 and the U.S. Big Three—GM, Ford, and

Chrysler—were able to increase sales over 2009. The final numbers show about 11.6 million vehicles were sold in the US in 2010. That follows a dismal 2009 where only about 10 million



were sold. That's around an 11% increase and the good news is a good portion of those sales went to the old Big Three. If the predictions for 2011 of sales in the range of 12.5 to 13 million ring true, this bodes remarkably well for the domestic auto industry. GM has been able to show a profit the last several quarters at these sales levels. A few years ago the company was struggling to make a profit when 17.4 million vehicles were sold. Talk about a turnaround!

This is why I believe we have a brighter future ahead. The bankruptcy has given GM the chance to show a profit at much lower sales levels than in the past. If and when sales return to previous levels, GM is set to make money hand over fist. Let's hope that the corporation remembers who helped them to get there—all our UAW brothers and sisters, both active and retired!

GM needs to remember and reward all of us for our sacrifices (and trust me, they will be loudly reminded!) They should also remember that it was the American public who chose to have them survive. For this GM should return to its roots of being a good civic neighbor. GM needs to give back to the people that saved it by supporting neighborhoods and cities that are homes to their factories. It wasn't that long ago that GM was looked upon with admiration for their civil conscience. That sort of industrial responsibility needs to return.

Retiree Picnics

Members of Local 652 will have a couple of chances to catch up with old friends in February this year. If you winter near Mesa, Arizona you should highlight February 17th on your calendar. The GM Hourly and Salaried Arizona Picnic will be held at the Red Mountain Park at noon. If you spend your time closer to Florida, February 22nd is your date. The Oldsmobile Florida Picnic will be held at noon at the American Legion Kirby Stewart Post in Bradenton. Both hourly and salary employees are welcome at both events. For details please see the notices on pages 4-5.

#### Winterfest

For all UAW members in the Lansing area, the Oldsmobile Outdoor Club is having its premier event, "Winterfest" at Houghton Lake February 11-13. The **Continued on page 7** 

#### LOCAL 652 Randy Freeman, Vice President

# Our commitment

As we are coming into another contract year and summiting our resolutions everyone needs to know, one of the things we feel strongly about and keeping it in front of us is

ing it in front of us is in this message: The UAW owes a debt to those who came before us. Much was sacrificed to build this great union. We have an obligation to ensure that those who



come after us benefit from a strong and vibrant UAW. With teamwork in the leadership and solidarity in the ranks, and with active and retired members working hand-in-hand, the UAW's future will be as bright and bold as its past. This is the message from the UAW to the Retirees on the UAW website and we feel very strongly about it here at Local 652.

Just a heads up for active members the GM FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) process has changed. FMLA will now goes through Sedgwick at 800-489-4646 and you will also need to call GM's call-in number at 800-222-8889 to meet Doc 8.

Did you know if you have a Verizon phone that GM UAW members are getting 20% discount, active and retired? Make sure you are getting yours. If not, they are located inside the ABC Warehouse on Pennsylvania Av. Or call them at 517-887-1885.

**Local 724 Meetings** Local 724 meets the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

#### Local 2256 meetings

Meetings are on the fourth Wednesday of the month. The executive board meets at 6:30 p.m. and the general membership meeting is at 7:30 p.m. Meetings are at the hall, 2114 N. East St., Lansing. Phone 485-5883.

#### LOCAL 724 Debra Mills, Financial Secretary

# To a brighter year

Happy New Year, everyone. By the time you read this, the Christmas holiday has passed and we will have celebrated the 2011 New Year. As we look

back on 2010, we have since seen some improvements on our economic decline which touched everyone in our nation. We all have family and friends who have been impacted by the

loss of a job, home, or savings. As we move into 2011, let's hope for a brighter and secure future.

All of us at Local 724 would like to thank everyone for their donations. Our Holiday Tree of Warmth was a success! The hats, mittens, scarves, and gloves will be given to needy people in our community.

Local 724 held a Christmas party for its members on December 18. The party was wonderful, the families had a nice time, the children saw Santa Claus, and they had many activities to participate in, and received a present from Santa. There were lots of smiling faces, and we had about 60 to 75 children, so needless to say, it was a good time.

I would like to thank all of the members who worked on the Committees and the units along with Local 724 donations to make the party a success. And a big Thanks to Santa—he was a hit.

So as we continue in the 2011 year, let's still remember to buy American and union, because as you know we still have many sisters and brothers out of work.

Let's continue to help our own and make this a successful year.



#### Mike Bauer

# 652 retirees

Happy New Year to everyone! Our monthly schedule of events is as follows:

First Tuesday of the month is Bingo. The games start at 6:00 p.m.

Third Tuesday of the month is our Bohemian dinner and business meeting. Bring your own table service and a dish to pass. Dinner starts at noon.

Fourth Tuesday of the month is card night starting at 6:00 p.m. Card night is for Locals 652, 602, and 1618.

February 11 is White Shirt Day. Wear a white shirt on this day to honor the Sitdowners. The White Shirt Day celebration will be held in Flint at Local 599 starting at 11:00 a.m. This is the day for the VCAP ticket drawings, with the first prize being a blue and white Chevrolet Camero SS. Local 599 is located at 812 Leith St., Flint, MI 48505

Our next social night will be April 12 from 5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

The Region 1C Retiree Euchre Tournament will be held Wednesday, May 4, at Local 602, starting at 9:00 a.m. Retirees and spouses are eligible to play. You may register at any of our retiree functions or call 517-372-7581 extension 147 to leave your name and phone number. Participants are reminded to arrive no later than 8:45 a.m. to sign in. The winners of the Lansing tournament will play in the finals against Flint later that afternoon. Local 602 is located at 2510 W. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48917.

Condolences to the family of Al Lett who passed away Dec. 26, 2010. Al worked on the line and in the final repair pit, retiring Oct. 1, 1976.

Condolences to the family of Paul Zimmerman (Poor Paul, Mr. Z). Paul was a friend to all, and he will be missed.

The following members and associates are in our thoughts and prayers: Robert Abernathy, Carol Albrecht, Jewell Carrier, Marvin Davis, Gary Every, Dorothy Hoisington, Wilfred and Millie Pullman, Hedy Rose, Jean and Leonard Schneider, Willa Wright, and any others we may have missed.

The Lansing Labor News is now online. You may access it at www.lansinglabornews.org.

The Food Bank could use our help. If possible, bring canned goods to donate when you attend retiree events.

**OLDSMOBILE FLORIDA PICNIC** UAW LOCALS 652, 1618, 1753 and LAFCU, BOTH SALARY & HOURLY February 22, 2011

#### In Bradenton, Florida American Legion Kirby Steward Post

24000 75th Street West (Between Cortez & Manatee Ave.) Register at 11 a.m.

Eat at Noon

Meal and plastic tableware will be provided. Make plans to attend and see your friends from Lansing. Call Jere Auvenshine, (517) 626-2398, for information.

Send your change of address to: Lansing Labor News, 210 Clare St., Lansing, MI 48917. Please include your current address and the old address when requesting the change.

You may contact us at the following email address: retiree652@hotmail.com

#### Laura Clark

# 1753 retirees

Hello everyone, Happy New Year! Hope your holidays were warm and

bright! It was all that and more at the Local 1753 Christmas open house. The local furnished pizza and drink. Some members did even more! We ended up with a full



dinner with all the food and treats. Thank you very much to our wonderful folks and some of their spouses who brought goodies to share! Special thanks to all the members who helped on our fun fundraiser. Because of all your help our local was able to send the Greater Lansing Food Bank \$213 for Christmas.

The hall was warm and full of good cheer, for we had a great turnout: active workers before and after their shift, retirees sprinkled throughout, elected and appointed officers as they could.

Most of our retiree Euchre Tournament players were there. Thanks for the picture, guys! You and the trophy look good together. Do you think we could do as well this year, boys and girls? Now that we have won, it is up to us to host the next event. Please volunteer, we will need players, relief people and all around helpers of all kinds. You do not need a partner as everyone plays for themselves and 1753. If you are lucky enough to have a spouse who plays, or would like to help, bring them or other retirees. Lunch is provided during break and to make it more fun, there are cash prizes.

Last paper we asked for your thoughts and prayers for two of our members who were in the hospital. Well, it worked! I'm glad to report at this time Nancy Stone and Gabrielle LaBelle have been released and are in good health. Thanks to all and good luck, girls.

Last year was tough on all of us, but as union workers it was not bad as it could have been. Last year many lost their jobs as many more businesses closed. These people have no pension or health care. They need our help. Singly, we try; together, we can do it.

Have you sent your retirees' V-CAP tickets in? These tickets pay for outreach in the community. Not only do they strengthen us, they help bring everyone up. Did you know your V-CAP tickets could not only win you a new car or cash, but because of the red "retired" on it you are in an extra drawing?

How about your union dues? Did you sign up before you retired? We can check that at the next meeting. Do you volunteer at the Local? The Election committee always needs help.

Nominations for the Election Committee are at the January General Membership Meeting. Please consider serving on the Election Committee, as it saves money for the Local, and it's fun too! Do you invite coworkers to come to lunch and meetings when you run into them in the community?

It looks like it will be another rough one this year. I know that if we all pull together, we can do better. We can be stronger, healthier, and happier and help others do the same thing!

#### News from the breakfast bunch

I got a call, and they're going to try a new spot. The new Jackie's Diner at 4421 W. Saginaw, formerly the Ponderosa Restaurant, 323-6512. We will meet on January 24 at 8:30 a.m. They will save the front room just for us! Please come to breakfast, it's fun to see friends you haven't seen in a while and I hear they have a great breakfast deal.

The Election Committee Nominations are on Sunday, January 16 at 6:00 p.m. at the General Membership Meeting. Please attend.

The next lunch and meeting is, as always, the second Thursday of the month, February 10, 12:00 lunch, 1:00 meeting. Please bring a dish to pass; if not, please bring yourself.

#### **1753 Retirees Breakfast**

New location: Jackie's Diner, 4421 W. Saginaw at 8:30 a.m. Join your fellow 1753 retirees for breakfast the fourth Monday of every month at 8:30 a.m.

#### Lois Schultz 1618 retirees

Hi out there, all you wonderful people. Ted Gauss' breakfast will be on the first Tuesday in April, that is April 5, at Guerrazzi's Restaurant, 15463 US Highway 27, Lansing. It starts at 9:00 a.m.

There will be a casino trip March 21-22. If interested, call Connie Dunn at 517-323-2146.

Russ Little is on our sick list. I went to see him and he looks good. He takes it one day at a time.

Jerry Raymun is on the mend and is hanging in there after heart surgery.

I am doing a lot better. My energy is up, so that's a good thing. The first Tuesday of the month I work at the Senior Center on the Jamboree, which is lots of fun. Then there's union business, so I do keep busy. You know we have to do that! I'm glad for my pacemaker.

Remember our meeting and potluck on the second Wednesday of the month at UAW Local 1753 on West St. Joseph Hwy. We eat at noon. See you there! We also play bingo there.

I hope you are all in good health. The Republicans don't like the health care bill and will want to get rid of it. I think it will work like everything else, in that there's good and bad. It won't "kill jobs," it will make them.

Did you read the Solidarity magazine that's just out? From the readers: "You never got mad before. America, Stop the Madness! After eight years of disaster, now you're angry." This is a must to read. I think it is very good and true.

So, as the sun sets over Narrow Lake, this is a new year. Bless one and all and have a great year. Till we meet again, keep smiling.

#### **Dorothy Stevens**

# 602 retirees

We are starting a new year with a new Congress which will begin tackling its legislative priorities. There are serious concerns about the most critical domestic issues facing these lawmakers. It is the future of Social Security and Medicare. We need to contact our members in Congress and ask them to take a stand NOW and promise seniors, workers, and their families that they will do three things:

1.) Protect Social Security from needless benefit cuts to pay down deficits this program did not create and:

2.) Restore the Social Security COLA to a level that keeps pace with seniors' higher health care costs, heating expenses, and food and;

3.) Keep Medicare strong by rejecting proposals to repeal the Affordable Health Care for America Act.

Let's not forget the campaign promises of some of the newly elected lawmakers who have pledged to raise the Social Security Retirement age, reduce the COLA, and repeal the Affordable Health Care for America Act that is putting new life into Medicare. That would be a huge mistake. The Affordable Health Care for America Act, with its provisions to strengthen and improve Medicare, has already added 12 years to the solvency of the Medicare Part A trust fund. It will take a fight to keep this law in effect.

We cannot allow the Republican majority in the House to go forward with its agenda of deregulation, protecting Big Oil, rolling back Wall Street reforms, denying rights to victims of corporate crime and wrongdoing, and providing massive tax breaks for the rich.

We need to make sure that our elected representatives represent our interests, and not those of Big Oil and billionaires who expect a return on their electoral investment.

Americans must fight to take back their government from the lobbyists and big money special interests that shape our laws to suit their own interests and not for the good of the nation.

There is no doubt about it, we are in for some rough time-but if everyone will join together we can prevail.

For each of you who have lost a loved one or dear friend, we send you our condolences. For all of those on the sick list and the homebound, we wish you a speedy recovery. You are in our thoughts and prayers.



