

The United Worker

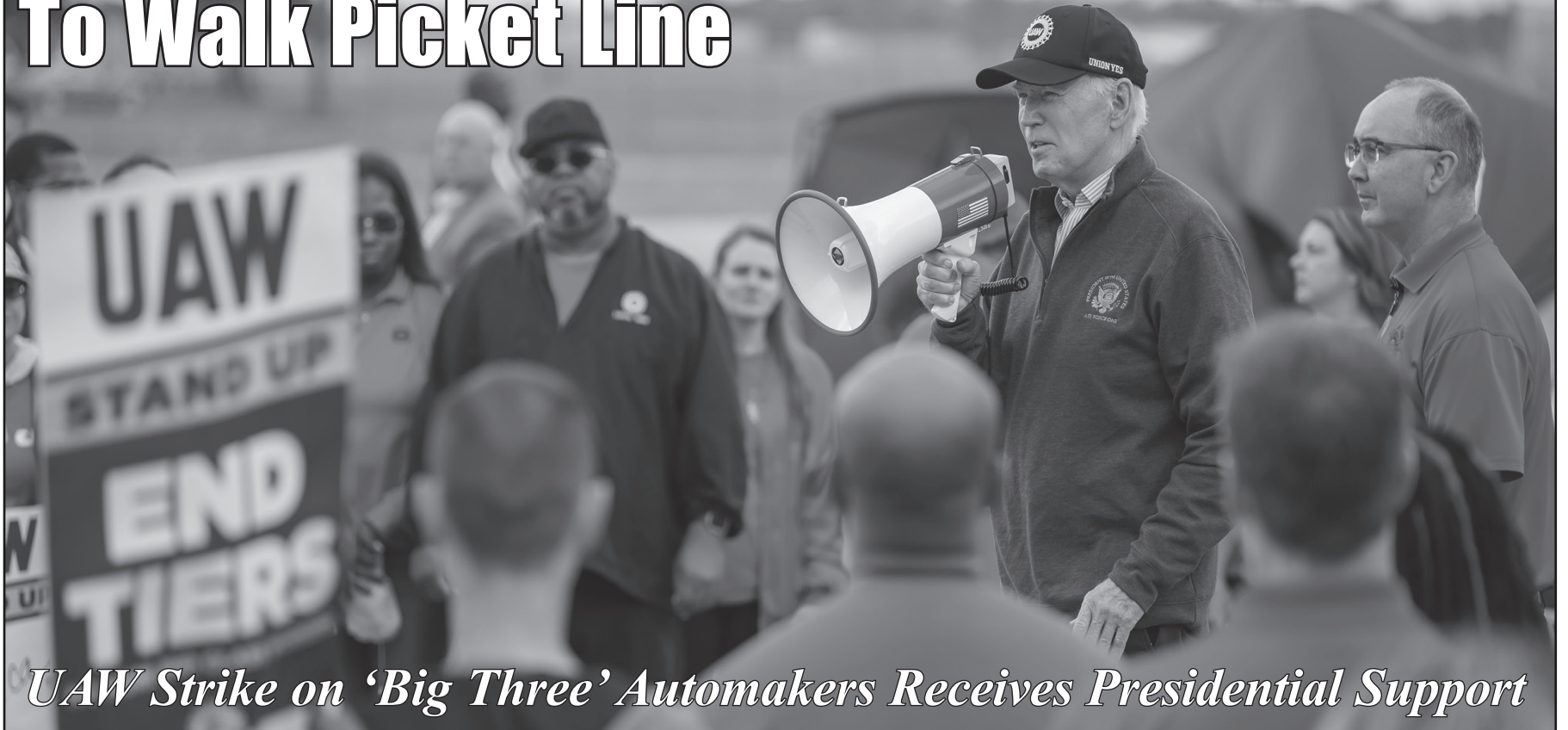
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Volume 49, Number 3

July-September

2023

Biden Becomes First Sitting U.S. President To Walk Picket Line



UAW Strike on 'Big Three' Automakers Receives Presidential Support

President Biden speaks into a megaphone in support of UAW members. UAW President Shawn Fain is also pictured (far right). (Photo courtesy White House).

Editor's note: The following story has been adapted from a Press Associates article by Mark Gruenberg.

In a historic appearance, the first-ever by an incumbent U.S. president on any union's picket line, Joe Biden told United Auto Workers members, "it's time to get back what we lost" in winning wage and benefit hikes from Ford, GM and Stellantis/FiatChrysler.

Sporting a black UAW baseball cap and blue windbreaker, the Democratic president joined red-shirt-clad members of UAW Local 174 outside Ford's historic Willow Run Ford assembly plant for around 15 minutes on September 26.

"You guys, the UAW, have made a lot of sacrifices and gave up a lot," Biden declared through a bullhorn. "The companies were in trouble, but now they're doing incredibly well. And guess what? You should be doing incredibly well, too. You deserve a significant raise."

"It's time to get back what we lost." "You've earned what you've earned and you should be earning a helluva lot more."

That means "the significant increase you need" in wages "and other benefits," he added. "It's time for them to step up for us."

The workers, who interrupted his brief remarks with cheers several times, are among the almost 18,000 UAW members nationwide who now walk lines in the union's growing "Stand Up!" strike against the Detroit 3.

It's UAW's first-ever strike against all three, just as bargaining is the first-ever against all of them at the same time. Combined, the car firms employ 150,000 UAW members, not counting those in non-Big 3 parts suppliers or 5,600 workers whom Ford employs in Canada, represented by Unifor.

The UAW strike has political and class aspects, too, though neither Biden nor new UAW President Shawn Fain—its first-ever popularly vote-elected president—mentioned politics. Fain, who followed Biden to the podium, talked class, too.

"It's a different kind of war we're fight-

ing," not against the Axis powers of World War II, "but against corporate greed" here at home, Fain said. "Our people choose to stand up and fight for economic and social justice." His Axis reference cited Willow Run's enormous production of B-24 Liberator bombers during that conflict.

If there is no movement by GM or Stellantis in the talks, the UAW will call more locals out on strike. Ironically, though Local 174 in Willow Run picketed the plant there, it's the only Ford plant where workers are striking, because Ford has moved significantly in bargaining.

The last expansion of the strike, on September 22, saw locals at 38 GM and Stellantis-unionized parts factories, but no others from Ford called to walk out, joining one plant from each automaker who began picketing a week before.

Key issues in the talks with all three automakers are wages, restoration of traditional defined-benefit pensions and health care, an end to the hated two-tier pay system at all three automakers, a shorter work week, curbs on mandatory overtime and mandatory work on the third Sunday of every month, and restoration of cost-of-living (COLA) increases.

The workers demand a 36% hike over four years to make up for losses to inflation since the 2008 financier-caused Great Recession. That crash forced GM and FiatChrysler into bankruptcy.

A Democratic Obama administration loan guarantee plan saved the two, but at the cost of imposing the two tiers, eliminating COLAs, a freeze on retiree pensions which continues, and the sell-off of health care coverage to the UAW, among other givebacks.

Ford agreed to the COLAs, the end of two tiers and several other UAW member goals, including the right to strike over domestic plant closures. GM and Stellantis have barely budged. Their sole reported agreement: Adding Juneteenth as a paid holiday.

"President Biden is demonstrating once again that he is the most pro-union president in history," AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler

said in a statement afterwards. "Working people know he has our backs every day and that he understands UAW members' fight for a fair contract is deeply connected to the struggle over the soul of our country."

"We stand with President Biden, the UAW, and workers across the country who are sick and tired of getting the short end of the stick. Together, we're organized to fight back against the corporate CEOs who have rigged the system against working people for far too long."

Biden's remarks on the picket line also occurred though the union was a notable absentee from the giant AFL-CIO-organized joint union endorsement of the Biden-Harris ticket earlier this year. That conclave, in Philadelphia, even drew non-AFL-CIO unions, notably the Service Employees.

But not the UAW. Both the union and the Detroit 3 back the shift to electric-powered cars, trucks and SUVs, a key part of Biden's plan to cut U.S. greenhouse gas emissions which cause global

warming. But the first two federal loans to build electric vehicle battery plants went to firms in anti-union Kentucky and Tennessee, not pro-union Michigan.

The car companies also are using conversion of their plants to electric vehicle assembly, which will cost billions of dollars, as an excuse to both pause EV battery plant construction, and to deny workers' demands for the big raises. UAW also wants EV plant workers included in its contracts with the Detroit 3, rather than on separate and lower pay tracks for auto parts workers.

University of Rhode Island labor history professor Erik Loomis told CNN Biden's picket line walk and talk was "absolutely unprecedented." He said presidents—going all the way back to Theodore Roosevelt—"saw themselves as mediators. They did not see it as their place to directly intervene in a strike or in labor action."

Additional Coverage on Pages 7-8



Personnel from the UIW's parent union, the Seafarers International Union (SIU), gather in Houston to show support for the UAW strike.

From the President

Union Strong, Now and Forever



David Heindel

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler and Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond recently delivered an inaugural State of the Unions address, where they shared the results of a new, independent poll. That survey underscores the American people's strong, growing support of unions. The data shows that 71 percent of Americans back organized labor, with 88 percent of people younger than age 30 holding a favorable view of unions. Don't overlook the fact that the under-30 demographic represents the future (and some of the present) of the nation's workforce.

At press time, there are important labor actions happening across the country. While signs are favorable that our brothers and sisters in the Writer's

Guild of America have reached a new agreement with their workplaces, our fellow unionists in the UAW are still on strike, largely because of unfair wages and corporate greed. Likewise, the SAG-AFTRA job action continues – and that's also a strike that centers on fair treatment of workers.

As an affiliate of the AFL-CIO, our union supports the strikes. We stand in solidarity with those union members and their officials, and we definitely understand that a strike is always a last resort. Nevertheless, withholding one's labor is a basic right in this country, and we don't need to look into the distant past to know that such actions are effective.

As you'll read in this issue of the United Worker, the labor movement is also receiving incredible support from the Biden Administration, and it starts at the top. In late September, President Joe Biden became the first sitting President to walk a picket line. He's frequently stated that he's the most pro-union President in American History, and he's certainly put those words into action. When I met with him in Philadelphia on July 20, he also expressed his commitment to the labor movement, even when the cameras were off.

Not coincidentally, our movement has also seen recent wins coming from the National Labor Relations Board, which issued a new ruling in favor of card-checks. This new guidance replaces one from 1971, and is even tougher on employers who would seek to commit unfair labor practices in the run-up to a union election. It's a fair ruling, and it helps level the playing field for employees who want to form or join a union. Basically, it means that if an employer breaks the rules ahead of an election, and if a majority of workers have signed cards indicating they want union representation, they are automatically granted that outcome. By the way, there's nothing preventing employers from accepting the union if most of the employees have signed pledge cards

Much Appreciated

I want to thank President Shuler, Secretary-Treasurer Redmond and the rest of the AFL-CIO Executive Council for welcoming me to sit on the board beginning at the summer meeting in July. I hope to contribute in direct, meaningful ways in order to help guide the future of the labor movement, and I am grateful for the opportunity to continue to support working families across the country.

Being elected to the AFL-CIO Executive Council is truly an honor, and it's not something I take for granted.

It also underscores the importance of UIW's affiliation with the federation. We know we can count on the AFL-CIO to support us on our most important issues, and that means we speak with many millions of unified voices. That's also not something to be taken for granted, and it's the type of solidarity upon which the labor movement will continue building.



NLRB Decision Boosts Fairness In Union Representation Elections

New Ruling Revives and Revises Previously Eliminated Joy Silk Doctrine

A recent decision by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) helps restore fairness for workers seeking to obtain union representation.

The agency on Aug. 25 made its ruling on Cemex Construction Materials Pacific, LLC, 372 NLRB No. 130 (2023), also known as the Cemex standard. The new decision determines when employers are required to bargain with unions without conducting a representation election.

The board, which voted 3-1 on this decision, has provided a major boost to workers by facilitating recognition through a process known as card-check. This means that a union is allowed to represent workers in certain instances when a majority sign cards in support of unionizing, rather than going through the lengthy and often litigious election process.

The NLRB has ruled that when a majority of workers affiliate with a union (which can be designated by signing affiliation cards, à la Joy Silk doctrine), the employer can opt to voluntarily recognize the union at that point, or request that the NLRB hold an election. To discourage employers from committing unfair labor practices (ULPs), the newly set standard also states that if the employer does so during the time leading up to the election, the agency will immediately recognize the union and order the employer to bargain.

"Today's decision, along with the board's recently issued Final Rule on Representation, will strengthen the board's ability to provide workers across the country with a timely and fair process for seeking union representation," NLRB Chairman Lauren McFerran said of the new ruling. "The Cemex decision reaffirms that elections are not the only appropriate path for seeking union representation, while also ensuring that, when elections take place, they occur in a fair election environment. Under Cemex, an employer is free to use the Board's election procedure, but is never free to abuse it – it's as simple as that."

The Joy Silk doctrine, active from 1949 to 1969, allowed workers to form a union if they provided proof that a majority of workers wanted to unionize, rather than holding a formal, board-supervised election to certify the new union. Workers traditionally demonstrated interest in a union through collecting signed authorization cards from the majority of their bargaining unit.

The NLRB members in the majority for the Cemex ruling overruled Linden Lum-

ber's precedent (the 1971 case which previously established that an employer is not obligated to accept a card check as proof of majority status) because they believe it didn't provide enough protection to workers' rights to organize and collectively bargain.

The new Cemex standard differs from the Joy Silk doctrine, which required an employer to bargain with a union unless it had a good-faith doubt of the union's majority status. This newly approved framework does not require an employer's "good-faith doubt" of a union's majority status to file paperwork for an election, known as an RM petition; under Cemex, the employer's view on the matter is of no consequence. In accordance with the new ruling, the employer is required to either recognize and bargain with the union or promptly file an RM petition seeking an election when presented with proof that a majority of employees want to unionize.

However, the new Cemex standard does not fully impede employers from using other methods to avoid unionization in their workplaces. Even in situations when a majority of workers have made it clear that they desire collectively bargained contract negotiations, Cemex can only demand a start to the bargaining process. It cannot mandate the employer to actually reach agreement with workers and sign a contract.

The National Labor Relations Act forbids the board from imposing a contract if both parties fail to come to an agreement, and gives them license to appoint an arbitrator who can help them reach one. Language in the Act does allow the board or the selected arbitrators to impose a first contract after a set period of time has passed without resolution.

Unions have become increasingly popular in recent years, polling at or around 71 percent approval in the most recent Gallup poll results. Among younger Americans aged 18-29, approval of unions comes in at 88 percent, according to a recent poll publicized by the AFL-CIO.

The new Cemex ruling is expected to have a profound effect on unionization efforts across the nation. In fact, it already has. Trader Joe's in Manhattan is the first workforce to apply for recognition under the new framework. Under Cemex, their union election (which ended in a 76-76 tie) should be nullified due to the ULPs committed during the election and should result in automatic recognition of their union.



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Vol. 49, No. 3

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The family of Tony Brown gather around his commemorative plaque, holding up peace signs in his honor (left). Mrs. Harriett Brown, wife of the late Tony Brown, touches the plaque memorializing her husband (right).

Remembering the Life and Legacy of Tony Brown

UIW members gathered at the Blount Island terminal in Jacksonville, Florida on June 30 to honor the memory of Brother **Anthony “Tony” Brown**. Although he passed away on February 12 of 2021, his family and many of his colleagues came together this summer to commemorate his legacy.

In addition to the union members who were familiar with Brown, Jacksonville Safety Director Adam Bucalo, Patrolman Brian Guiry, and Port Agent Ashley Nelson also were in attendance. Tim Nolan and Jim Wagstaff of Tote Services and Brad Bishop of First Coast Termi-

nals also attended Brown’s memorial gathering.

“He was a huge staple in the Jacksonville area because of just how much his presence meant to us. He was the perfect union member and the perfect shop steward,” said Nelson of Brown’s life and legacy.

Brown was an original member of the UIW in Jacksonville, and his efforts were instrumental to getting them established there. He had been a valued member of the union since the Jacksonville shop’s inception in 2001.

He was known for being industrious, working alongside his father and brother at Brown’s Construction, their family’s business. Later in his career, he worked as a tire manager with Crowley Maritime. Brown’s final employment place was with Portis, also known as First Coast Terminals, where he worked for 22 years until he passed away. He held the position of Chief Shop Steward for the Jacksonville UIW.

UIW member **Jerry Pipken**, who was close to Brown during his lifetime, built the memorial in his remembrance. The concrete and granite model was

constructed at Southern Monument. It includes an etched bronze and laser-cut aluminum picture of Brown, clad in sunglasses and holding up a peace sign.

A section of the Jacksonville UIW shop has also been dedicated to Brown. The tire shop he previously worked at used to occupy the area where his memorial stands before the Jacksonville port was remodeled.

Brown is survived by his loving family, including his wife, Harriett, and his children, LaShay, Darrion and Tony Jr.



Jim Wagstaff, VP of Operations (Tote Services) leads the ceremony with a prayer of remembrance for Tony Brown (photo at left). Darrion Brown, son of the late Tony Brown, looks on as his father’s memorial is unveiled (right).

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A Day in the Life: PlymKraft Inc.



At left: Union Representative Josh Rawls (left), and shop stewards Lamont Davis (middle) and Anthony James (right) pose for a photo in front of one of PlymKraft's paper slitting machines. Right: A photo taken outside of the entrance to the PlymKraft factory.

Editor's Note: Special thanks to UIW Representative Josh Rawls for coordinating the shop visit.

The photos on page 4 and 5 were taken during a recent shop visit at PlymKraft, Inc., located in Newport News, Virginia. During the visit, Shop Stewards **Anthony James** and **Lamont Davis** gave a tour of the workplace, and spoke about their respective careers.

James has worked at PlymKraft since 1995, and is the Extrusion Team Lead. Davis, who started with PlymKraft in 1992, has been with the company for 31 years, and is the Team Lead for the Paper Slitting Department. During the

tour, the shop stewards went into detail on the operation of the state-of-the-art machinery, as well as demonstrated the operation of the machines.

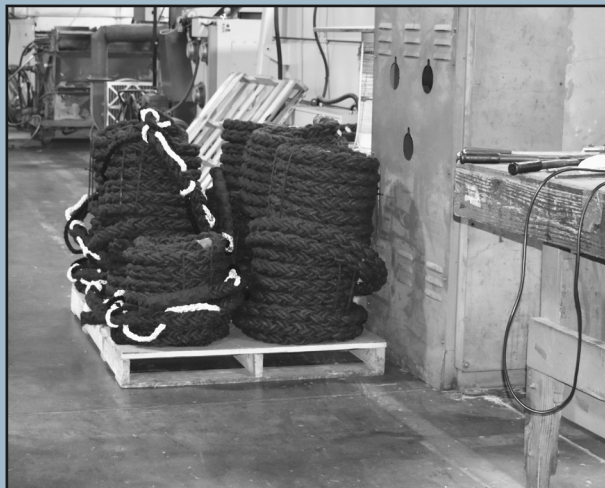
According to the company's own website, its origins are as follows: the renowned Plymouth Cordage Company (founded in 1824) and the distinguished Columbian Rope Company (established in 1903) were both once the world's largest producers of exceptionally high-quality fiber rope and twine products. To this day, PlymKraft Inc. continues their long-standing tradition of making quality products manufactured with pride of workmanship.

PlymKraft is a major U.S. supplier of cable fillers and paper tapes to the wire and cable industry in North America and Mexico and Columbian Specialty Products is the prominent U.S. manufacturer of military specification and specialty ropes. Workers at PlymKraft Inc. produce a variety of high-quality performance cable fillers and tapes, and their expertise is backed by years of continuous product development and industry-recognized manufacturing processes. The PlymKraft Columbian Specialty Products Division is also a leading supplier to the U.S. Military.

How It's Made: PlymKraft's Military Ropes



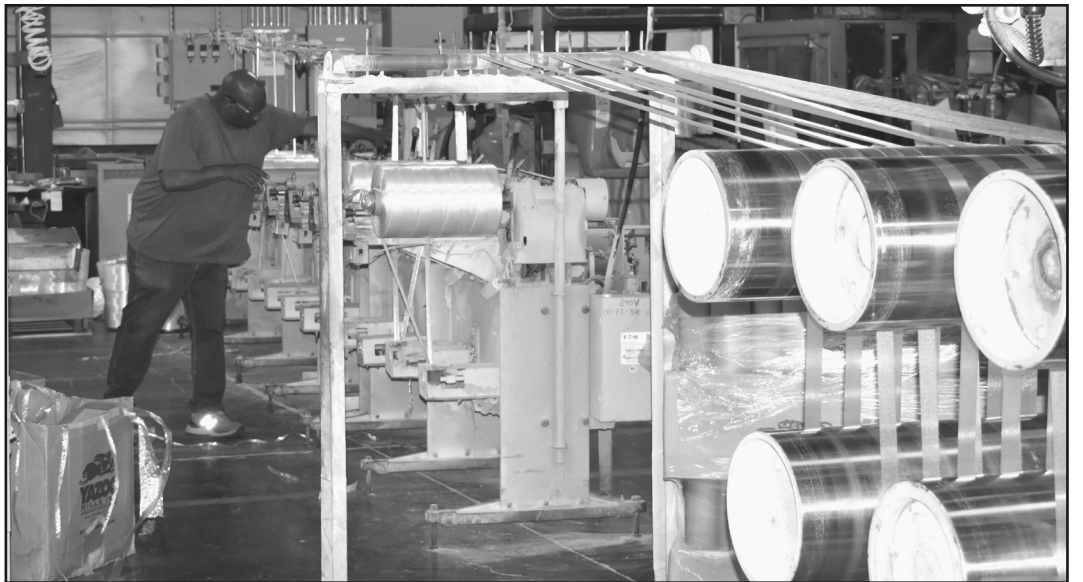
These machines are used to "run a tether," which is the process of putting a jacket over the yarns coming off the wall (seen in the image on the right) to make a tether which is used by the Department of Homeland Security. This particular machine (left) has a runtime of up to 8 hours and produces 23,500 feet of cable.



PlymKraft specializes in the construction of Helivac Cables (seen in both photos above), which are deployed from helicopters to aid Special Ops personnel with entry and evacuation.



Above from left, Union Representative Josh Rawls and Shop Stewards Lamont Davis and Anthony James pose for a photo during the shop tour. On the right is one of many paper slitting machines that line the center of the PlymKraft factory.



Pictured above, in left photo Shop Steward Lamont Davis stands next to rolls of paper cord, which is one of PlymKraft's main components used to make its products. In the right photo, Shop Steward Lamont Davis handles a machine designed to melt down polypropylene into sheets of film, which is then transformed into regular fibrillated polypropylene, or Poly-Fill filler.



Pictured above at left, these machines are used to spool yellow, flame-retardant Poly-ex (polypropylene monofilament) filler. Typically, it is used in power and control cable and can also be used as a specialty cable, utility filler, or even as tying twine. In the right photo are workers in the Machine/Fabrication shop, where parts and repairs for all the factory machinery is done.



Above, in the left photo, Shop Steward Anthony James works near a machine used to create and spool Poly-Fill, commonly used to fill cables. In right photo, shop steward Anthony James pulls polypropylene film through a machine, an early step in the process of creating Poly-Fill.

Credit Counseling just for you

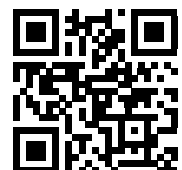
Debt and credit problems can happen to anyone at any time. The Union Plus Credit Counseling program can help you regain your financial footing by helping you better manage your finances. Get free credit counseling from certified counselors.



Take control of your credit



See more at
unionplus.org



UIW-CRDTCN-JFY-9-27-2023

Biden Joins Workers on Picket Line

In top photo: President Biden (left) fistbumps a UAW member during his visit to support workers striking outside of the Willow Run Ford Assembly plant on September 26. (Photo courtesy White House).

In bottom photo: UAW President Shawn Fain (foreground, second from left) looks on as President Biden (pictured center, with megaphone) addresses the workers on the picket lines. (Photo courtesy White House).



New UIW Pensioners

Mario Villacorte
Victory Refrigeration (Glynwed)
Philadelphia, PA

Moises Gomez
Urban Commons Queensway, LLC
Hawaiian Gardens, CA

Betzabe Tello Acuna
Evolution Hospitality
Long Beach, CA

Jose Gonzalez Rubalcava
Urban Commons Queensway, LLC
Long Beach, CA

Pelenato Pelenato
Rossmoor Community Assoc., Inc.
Long Beach, CA

Randy Richesson
Franklin International INC
West Jefferson, OH



Gone But Not Forgotten

ISAAC CROXTON

Pensioner Isaac Croxton, 89, passed away on July 28. Brother Croxton was born in North Carolina. Brother Croxton became a member of UIW in 1989 while working with Victory Refrigeration Glynwed and worked there until he began receiving retirement stipends in 2004. He lived in Philadelphia.

RONALD KLINGER

Pensioner Ronald Klinger, 88, passed away on August 16. Born in Trevorton, Pennsylvania, he became a member of UIW in 1970

while working with Paulsen Wire Rope Corporation. He continued to work with the company until he retired in 1993. Brother Klinger made his home in Northumberland, Pennsylvania.

DEBRA REED

Pensioner Debra Reed, 69, died on August 1. Sister Reed was born in Springfield, Ohio and joined the union in 1981. She worked at Church & Dwight Co. until she began receiving her pension in 1993. She made her residence in West Jefferson, Ohio.

FAITHANN SMINK

Pensioner Faithann Smink, 71, passed away on July 13. She was born in Shamokin, Pennsylvania. Sister Smink became a UIW member in 1989 and worked with A & E Products Group until she retired in 2004. She made her home in Northumberland in her home state of Pennsylvania.

PAUL STRAUB

Pensioner Paul Straub, 88, passed away on August 7. He was born in Freeburg, Pennsylvania and became a member of UIW in 1975.

He worked with Paulsen Wire Rope Corp. from the time he joined the union until he began receiving retirement stipends in 1993. Brother Straub resided in Jackson Township, Pennsylvania.





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**A Day in the Life: PlymKraft Inc.
Pages 4 - 5**

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Federation President Backs UAW

The AFL-CIO, to which the SIU is affiliated, has issued the following news item:

AFL-CIO on UAW Strike: Working People United in Fight to Win Fair Contracts Autoworkers Deserve

Statement from AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler on UAW members going on strike at Ford, General Motors (GM) and Stellantis:

When members of the International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW) went on strike at midnight, they sent a clear, unequivocal message to the country and the world that when working people stand together, united by justice and dignity, we have the collective power to demand the respect and fairness on the job we deserve.

Our message to the UAW members who are bravely striking to strengthen America for all of us is simple: We've got your backs and will stand with you however long it takes to win a fair contract that recognizes your value.

Every day, autoworkers give their hearts and souls to these companies, working to earn Ford, GM and Stellantis exorbitant profits reaching a quarter of a trillion dollars over the past decade. Instead of rewarding workers' commitment and sacrifice, the Big Three pay CEOs tens of millions while refusing to acknowledge the working people who are the backbone of these companies. Workers are striking for what we all deserve: fair pay, safety and security on the job; a clean energy future with good union jobs; and dignity in retirement.

This fight isn't just about autoworkers and their families, this is about creating a future where everyone can prosper. Gone

are the days of corporations running roughshod over workers with impunity. We're fed up and ready to do whatever is necessary to ensure companies give us the basic respect on the job we deserve, not just in the auto industry, but in every industry.

And the public is firmly in our corner. Seventy-five percent of Americans support autoworkers in this fight. That's because working people realize the only way we can get ahead in an economy that's been rigged against us for decades is through the solidarity and unity a union provides.

President Biden joined United Auto Workers (UAW) members on the picket line in Van Buren Township, Michigan on September 26 to show his support to workers striking against the big three automakers in the United States. With this action, President Biden became the first sitting President in history to ever physically show support by appearing at a strike. UAW members have been picketing Stellantis, Ford and General Motors since September 14.

Auto companies have seen record profits in recent years and workers on the production line are requesting a deal because they haven't seen any of those profits reflected in their pay.

United Auto Workers President Shawn Fain extended an invitation to Biden to join UAW members on the picket line, and the current president made good on his offer. Currently, workers are striking at 38 locations in 20 states.

"This is absolutely unprecedented. No president has ever walked a picket line before," said Erik Loomis, a professor at the University of Rhode Island and an expert on U.S. labor history. Presidents historically

Large Crowd at Houston Hall Labor Day Event



More than 200 people pack the Houston hall for an inaugural Labor Day gathering sponsored by the Texas Gulf Coast Area Labor Federation.

"avoided direct participation in strikes. They saw themselves more as mediators. They did not see it as their place to directly intervene in a strike or in labor action."

Biden touts himself as the "most pro-union president in American history". His administration has done much during its

tenure to advocate for worker's rights.

"This battle is not about the president," Fain said. "It's not about the former president. This battle is about the workers standing up for economic and social justice and getting their fair share because they're fed up with going backwards."

AFL-CIO Shares Labor Day Statements in Support of U.S. Workers

Editor's Note: The following statements have been sourced from press releases from the AFL-CIO's website.

AFL-CIO 2023 Labor Day Statement

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler: Unions Are America's Future. The Numbers Say So

In honor of Labor Day, the annual recognition of the labor movement and its contributions to the American worker, AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, penned an op-ed discussing the historic resurgence of unions, especially the record-breaking support amongst young people, and how that translates to working people in unions organizing like never before, holding big corporations accountable and restoring America's promise for all.

Newsweek: Unions Are America's Future. The Numbers Say So

A few weeks ago, I stood on the streets

of New York City with working actors, performers and writers from SAG-AFTRA and the Writers Guild of America who have been on strike for months now: risking their livelihoods to win a fair contract for themselves and all who come after. We chanted. We walked the picket line. But what inspired me most was when working people all around us — overwhelmingly young workers, in their 20s and 30s — saw what was happening and joined in: UPS drivers who laid on their horns to show support. Construction workers who clapped as they passed by. Food delivery workers who stopped for a minute to cheer us on.

Some people don't understand that. They ask: What could a UPS driver, a retail worker, an auto worker possibly have in common with Hollywood writers and actors? The answer is the story of the labor movement in America at this moment — people all over this country who have realized, no matter their job or industry, how much they have in common with their fellow workers. They are fed up with an economy that has been rigged against them. They are rebelling against a broken status quo. And they are turning to unions and the labor movement as their answer because they understand that a union is the vehicle for them to build and hold power to change their lives.

As the president of the AFL-CIO, the labor federation in America of 12.5 million workers and 60 unions strong, I've seen this firsthand. Over the past three years, our movement has been energized by a wave of activism from every demographic and sector of the

American economy. A new poll we conducted showed that more than two-thirds of Americans support unions, the highest number in 60 years. But here is the number that will really grab you: 88% of young workers in this country believe in the power of unions. 9 in every 10 Americans under the age of 30.

This Labor Day, I'd urge every American to ask a young person in your life: why their generation is so strongly pro-union. They will point to an economy that has been broken by corporate greed and their place in it: where they worry every month about making enough to pay the rent, let alone afford a mortgage, while CEOs hand themselves tens of millions of dollars. They'll talk about the gig economy — where they are forced from job to job with poverty wages, few basic rights and no security or chance to grow. They will point out how out-of-reach even the idea of home ownership has become.

All the while, they must contend with the existential crises that loom above all: a climate crisis that has them working in 110-degree temperatures. Politicians actively trying to destroy our democracy. Tech and A.I. that executives may use to replace them.

But they're not giving up. They're doing the opposite. More than 200 strikes have occurred in the U.S. since the beginning of this year — many led by these same young people. These young workers are coming into the movement because they know a union on the job is an act of defiance against the status quo. Because our agenda is their agenda: We deliver good-paying, stable jobs. Jobs that are safe. Jobs that do not leave you bounc-

ing from gig work to gig work. And because we use our power beyond the workplace: to stand up for our democracy, protect against A.I. that dehumanizes and degrades work, and take on the climate crisis. Young workers know what all workers know: It's better in a union.

We need to start by organizing — making sure every person in this country who wants to join a union can do so, or gets help forming their own. We're going to go into sectors of the economy that have never been unionized before — including these new clean energy and infrastructure jobs coming down the pike from President Biden's trillions in investment — and make sure they're good union jobs for this next generation.

And as we get more people into good union jobs, we grow our power exponentially. Think about what becomes possible: Our strikes and collective action will carry even more weight. We can stand up even more directly to big corporations. We can make unsafe workplaces safe and secure a family sustaining wage. We can throw even more muscle into elections at the local and national level: protecting our reproductive rights, our voting rights, and a right to join a union — with the weight of tens of millions of Americans behind us. We can define the future of work on our terms, so that A.I. is used to make our jobs and our lives better instead of replacing us.

That's where we're headed. This Labor Day, we're on the rise, driven by the energy and activism of working people all over this country. And I hope every American will join us to build the future we're all hungry for.

