



**LOOKING  
BACK**

*Moving Forward*

Michigan Labor History Society Newsletter

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# MICHIGAN LABOR

## *The Long Journey to Justice*



Photo: Jim Westphoto.com

**Michigan union members took to the streets last year to protest racism and support the Black Lives Matter movement.**

As the Black Rights Matter movement sharpened the focus on racism in recent years, it reminded us that the Michigan labor movement has grappled with racial, gender, and social justice issues for many decades. Some of the stories in this issue examine these historical events, which include the 40th anniversary of the murder of Vincent Chin, and one of the earliest campaigns for LGBT rights in the workplace, 30 years ago.

Michigan workers were fighting for equal justice as long ago as the 19th Century, but their efforts moved into high gear in the 1930s when the industrial-union movement spurred a huge growth in union activity and solidarity among Black and white, native-born and foreign-born, and male and female workers.

In 1932 the Ford Hunger March and in 1937 the Battle of the Overpass brought together workers of different ethnic and racial backgrounds in the fight for union recognition at Ford Motor Company. At General Motors, Chrysler, and other

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**A young visitor learns about the Ford Hunger March from a plaque at the Fort Street Bridge Park memorial built with parts salvaged from the old bridge where marchers gathered on March 7, 1932.** Photos by Mikael Elsilä



## Michigan's Newest Labor Monument

On the banks of the Rouge River just south of the Fort Street Bridge stands the newest monument to labor history in Detroit, "March On," commemorating the Ford Hunger March when 3,000 jobless workers and their supporters gathered outside the nearby Ford Rouge plant on March 7, 1932, to demand economic relief. It was a time when more than half of Ford's workers were laid off, wages of remaining workers had been slashed, and the unemployment rate in Detroit was over 40 percent.

Visitors to the new monument will see two metal arms sweeping skyward from a sculpture made of parts salvaged from the old Fort Street Bridge where workers gathered before marching to the plant, about a mile away. There they were met with tear gas and bullets fired by Dearborn police and Ford security guards. Five marchers died and dozens more were wounded.

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## LOOKING BACK *Moving Forward*

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### OFFICERS Co-Chairs:

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James Harris, *Director, UAW Region 1*  
Daryl Newman, *President,  
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## MLHS Elects New Co-Chairs

The Michigan Labor History Society has two new co-chairs, elected for three-year terms at a virtual membership meeting November 22, 2021.

UAW Region 1 Director James Harris was elected to succeed Frank Stuglin, now secretary-treasurer of the International UAW. UAW Region 1A Director Laura Dickerson was elected to succeed Chuck Browning, now a vice president of the International UAW. Daryl Newman, president of the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO, was reelected as the third co-chair.

All three co-chairs bring years of labor activism to their positions. Harris became a member of UAW Local 1700 at the Chrysler Sterling Heights Assembly Plant in 1994, and was named UAW Region 1 assistant director in 2018. Dickerson joined UAW Local 600 in 1997 and is the first African American woman to be elected a UAW regional director. She was appointed Region 1 assistant director in 2020. Newman has served as president of the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO since 2019 and served as member mobilizer for the American Federation of Teachers Michigan and then as Michigan AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer.



Photo: Walter P. Reuther Archives of Labor History, Wayne State Univ.



Photo: Dave Elsila

**Above, Hunger marchers cross the Fort Street Bridge, March 7, 1932. Left, UAW Local 600 President Bernie Ricke speaks at the dedication of the Hunger March memorial and the Fort Street Bridge Park.**

## Labor Monument

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Detroit's Unemployed Councils had organized the march, mobilizing supporters at a rally the day before at the Danceland hall on Woodward Ave., addressed by Communist Party leader William Z. Foster and others. The next morning marchers set out from a half-dozen locations, joining together for their final leg to Oakwood and Fort Streets in Detroit. They carried 14 demands: free medical care for workers at Ford Hospital, full wages for part-time workers, an end to foreclosures at the homes of laid-off workers, and more.

Once they crossed the border from Detroit into Dearborn along Miller Rd., police assaulted them with tear gas, water hoses, and guns. Killed that day were Joe York, Joe DiBlasio, Coleman Leny, and Joe Bussell. A fifth person, Curtis Williams, an African American, died months later of causes possibly related to injuries sustained during the Hunger March. His body was cremated at Woodmere Cemetery.

Markers placed at the cemetery by UAW Local 600's Retirees Chapter pay tribute to the victims. Headstones bear the legend, "His life for a union."

Years later, Ford retiree Dave Moore, who took part in the march at age 18, remembered that day as he looked down Miller Road, wiping

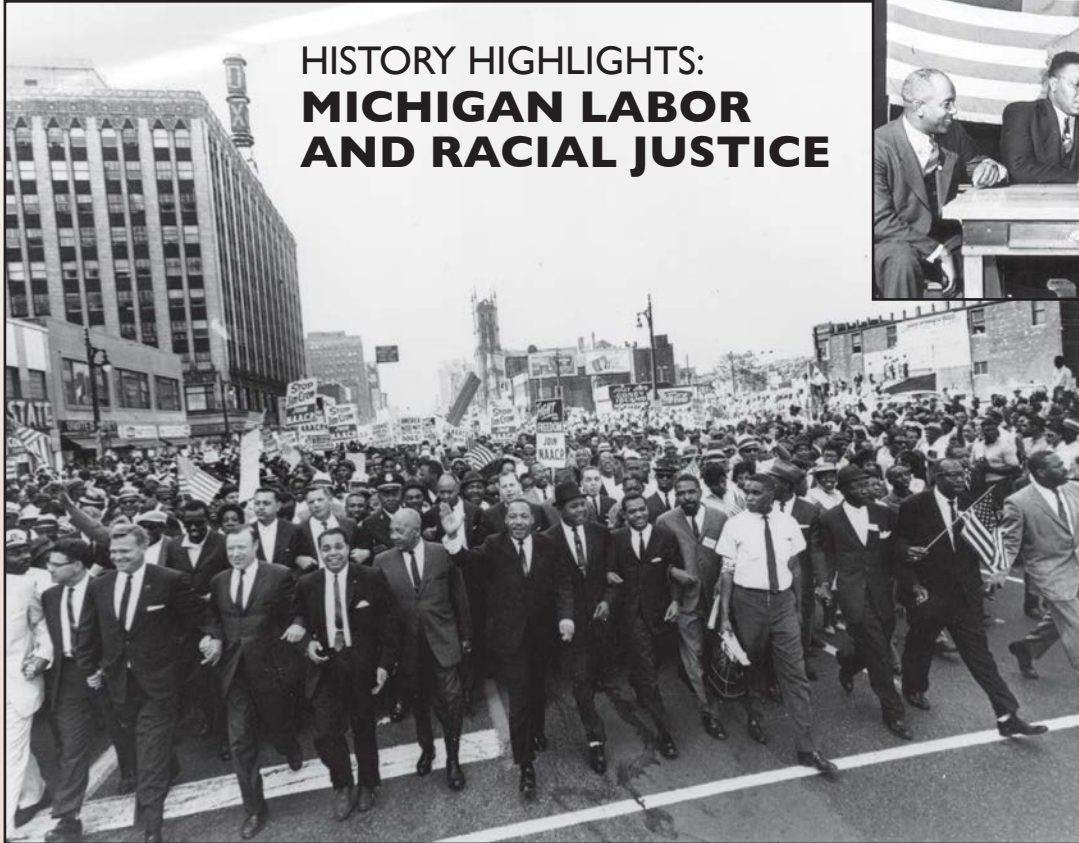
back tears. "The soles of your shoes, the tires of your cars" are moving over "the blood of our martyrs," he told members of the Michigan Labor History Society who were with him on a visit to the site of the march.

The day after the march, the three Detroit newspapers carried stories blaming the bloodshed on Communist agitators. The events were treated by much of the media as the result of a "Red" demonstration.

But over the years the Ford Hunger March has come to be seen as part of a broad protest by unemployed workers seeking economic relief during the worst days of the Great Depression. Along with the 1937 Battle of the Overpass at the Rouge plant, in which union organizers were beaten and one died, it was a precursor to a successful organizing drive by the United Auto Workers, which won a representation election and bargained its first contract at Ford in 1941.

"March On," the memorial to the Ford Hunger March, stands as the centerpiece of the Fort Street Bridge Park, developed by the MotorCities National Heritage Area with funding from individuals, businesses, foundations, and organizations including the Michigan Labor History Society. The park, which includes landscaping and a rain garden, also highlights environmental issues including the cleanup of the Rouge River.

## HISTORY HIGHLIGHTS: MICHIGAN LABOR AND RACIAL JUSTICE



The fight for equality and justice took many forms in Michigan labor history. Among them, clockwise from top: Black organizers plan the UAW Ford campaign, 1937-1941; addressing bowling discrimination, 1940s and 1950s; marching with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (left) in Detroit, 1963.

Photos: Walter P. Reuther Archives of Labor History, Wayne State University

## Journey to Justice

*Continued from page 1*

plants workers from many ethnic backgrounds organized together.

### WOMEN ORGANIZE

It wasn't only the predominantly male workforce in auto plants that participated in that revolution. While mostly male autoworkers in Flint and Detroit were occupying their worksites, women workers in cigar factories, dime stores, and restaurants were also organizing. Among the largely female workforce at General Motors' Ternstedt plant in Detroit, native-born and foreign-born workers resisted management's attempt to divide them by ethnicity and joined together in a 1937 slow-down strike that led to GM's recognition of their union. The same year, at Woolworths dime store in downtown Detroit, more than a hundred women occupied their store for six days to win a contract.

### DESEGREGATING BOWLING

The campaign for justice wasn't confined to the workplace. Even when union members engaged in after-work



recreational activities, they confronted discrimination.

"We threw up a picket line of about a thousand workers outside" a bowling alley on West Lafayette Street in Detroit in 1941, recalled Dave Moore, a member of United Auto Workers Local 600, after the Detroit Recreation Center had turned away Moore and other Black members of the local's bowling league. "All hell broke loose," he said. "Some of the white guys wanted to tear the joint up they were so upset. The owner called the police, and we



decided against that."

Instead, the local's attorney Maurice Sugar advised going to court, and soon after, the bowling alley's owner agreed to let Black team members bowl. It would take close to twenty years before

the American Bowling Congress eliminated its rule barring Black bowlers from their leagues, a period when unions organized their own integrated leagues to challenge the ABC's monopoly.

### MARCHING FOR JOBS AND FREEDOM

In 1963, thousands of Michigan union members and others joined the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in a March for Jobs and Freedom on Detroit's Woodward

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## Journey to Justice

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Avenue to a waterfront arena, where King gave his famous “I Have a Dream” speech two months before electrifying the crowd at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. King had actually drafted the speech at Solidarity House, the UAW’s Detroit headquarters.

Continuing into the 1970s, Michigan unions led local campaigns to boycott grapes in support of the struggle by Mexican American workers for recognition of the United Farm Workers in California fields. During the worldwide campaign against apartheid in South Africa, Michigan union members picketed Shell Oil stations to protest Shell’s support of the South African economy. And once Nelson Mandela was freed, he came to a mass rally at Detroit’s old Tiger Stadium, smiling broadly as he wore a UAW shirt and hat.

### CHALLENGES ALONG THE WAY

Labor’s efforts for racial justice have not always proceeded smoothly. In 1943, white workers at the Packard auto company in Detroit walked out to protest job promotions of Black workers, and UAW President R. J. Thomas had to personally intervene in this “hate strike” to protect Black workers’ rights.

In 1968, African-American workers at Hamtramck’s Dodge Main auto plant, organized the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM) to demand not just equal treatment by the company, but also more representation by Black workers in the UAW’s leadership ranks. An estimated 4,000 workers joined a three-day wildcat strike and their campaign spread to several other plants, as Black workers pressed their demands. Since then, there has been a steady increase in the number of Black UAW leaders. Today, the president and two regional directors of the UAW are African American.

### VINCENT CHIN

Racism caught the headlines again in 1982, when Chinese-American



**Top, Protesting Shell Oil’s support of apartheid, 1986.**

Photo: Walter P. Reuther Archives of Labor History, Wayne State University

**Left, UAW Vice President Marc Stepp and President Owen Bieber welcoming Nelson Mandela to Detroit, 1990.** Photo: Daymon Hartley

draftsman Vincent Chin was assaulted by a laid-off UAW Chrysler worker and his stepfather, a Chrysler supervisor, at a Highland Park bar. Chin died of his wounds, and the attack was widely seen as influenced by the anti-Asian prejudice that gripped much of Detroit as Japanese autos penetrated the car market.

Crudely-drawn stereotypes of Japanese workers appeared on the wall of the General Motors Fleetwood plant in Detroit. But the same period also saw the founding of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA), which would build strong ties with the labor movement and has sought for nearly forty years to defend the civil rights of the estimated 660,000 union members of Asian and Pacific descent.

In the 1990s, the UAW came to the aid of a gay worker facing harassment at a Michigan auto plant, and 1994 saw the founding of Pride at Work to defend LGBT workers.

### BLACK LIVES MATTER

When George Floyd was killed in Min-

neapolis, setting off a nationwide Black Lives Matter movement, union members in Michigan and elsewhere quickly responded. UAW members stopped work for eight minutes and 49 seconds in plants and workplaces to mark the time that a policeman kept

his knee on Floyd’s neck. In Detroit, members of the Electrical Workers, the Teachers, and other unions joined in justice demonstrations, one of which, a Juneteenth rally, took place at the Labor Legacy Landmark on Detroit’s waterfront.

Several unions have re-emphasized their efforts to bring more Black and minority workers into the trades. The Service Employees International Union organized a work stoppage in Detroit and elsewhere to remember George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and other victims of police violence, while calling for higher wages and safer working conditions for workers in nursing homes and fast-food businesses, many of whom are African Americans.

The year 2022 marks the 90th anniversary of the Ford Hunger March, the 85th anniversary of the wave of sit-down strikes, and the 40th anniversary of the murder of Vincent Chin. It’s an appropriate time to reflect on the struggles that labor has waged for racial, gender, and social justice over the past decades.

# When Labor Let Its Values Down

## Remembering Vincent Chin

*Forty years ago, when anti-Asian feelings were on the rise in Detroit's auto plants, a Chinese-American worker was murdered. What role did bigotry and prejudice play in his death?*

Commentary by SANDRA ENGEL

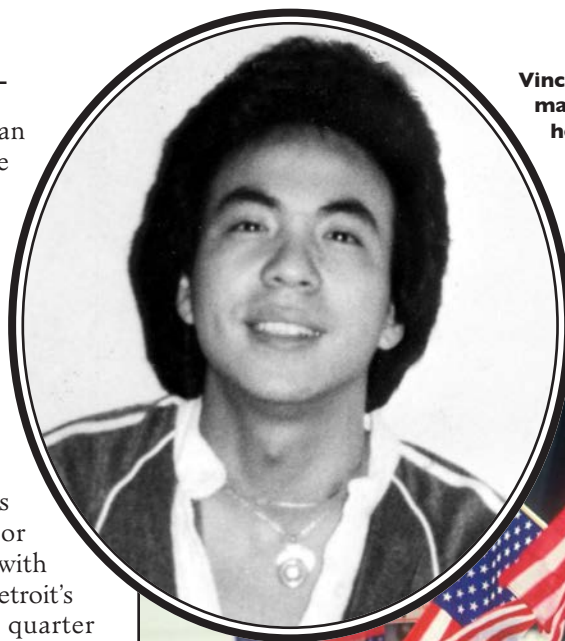
Since the first workers began organizing, unions have been driven by an urgent need to seek justice and fairness for all. Unions don't come into being just because of outrage: we channel our anger into seeing that individuals are treated fairly and justly. It's what fuels our bargaining and political action. It becomes a core value of our movement.

There is a legion of examples in Michigan of organized labor meeting struggles and reacting with a demand of justice for all. In Detroit's Cadillac Square an estimated quarter million workers rallied in 1937 to support sit-down strikers including several hundred female (and mostly immigrant) workers striking for recognition in their cigar factories. And sixty years later, thousands of trade-unionists from all over the world came to Detroit for two days of rallying to support striking newspaper workers. More recently, United Auto Workers Local 600 members took to the streets to fight rampant evictions. We have been at our best when we fight not just for ourselves, but for others as well.

In stark contrast are moments where we fail to live up to these values and ignore the mandates of our movement, or when we stop hearing the voices of the communities that depend on us to be an ally in fighting for what's right. That is when our values erode, slowly. Examining our failings does not make us weaker or undermine our moral authority. Learning from them is a profound way to find value in our failings and emerge stronger on the other side.

That's why the story of Vincent Chin is important.

In 1982, Vincent Chin was murdered by two men who worked in the auto



**Vincent Chin, left, was 27 years old and about to be married when he was murdered during a time of heightened anti-Japanese emotions.** Photo: Walter P. Reuther Archives of Labor History, Wayne State University

**Below and page 6, anti-Japanese feelings ran high in the 1980s as some workers linked their economic distress with an increase in Japanese auto imports. Factories displayed stereotypical pictures of Japanese workers who were blamed for the layoffs occurring in U.S. factories.** Photo: JimWestphoto.com



industry, because they thought he was Japanese and, therefore, the cause of their economic insecurity.

This is what we know from the court case: Ronald Ebens was a superintendent at Chrysler's Warren Truck Assembly and Michael Nitz was a laid-off Chrysler worker who was also Ebens' stepson. Vincent Chin was a 27-year-old Chinese American who was celebrating his upcoming wedding with friends.

It was a cool night in Highland Park on June 19, 1982, when the three found themselves at the same strip club. Ebens was heard to call Chin "chink" and "nip"

and said to Chin, "[i]t's because of you little m—f—s that we're out of work."

A fight broke out and everyone left the club, but the anger continued. Ebens and Nitz then got a baseball bat from their car and started to look for Chin, offering a stranger \$20 to find the "Chinese guy" because they were going to be "busting his head." They eventually found Chin at a McDonald's, and, after a short chase, Nitz grabbed Chin and held his arms down while Ebens beat Chin's head in with the bat. Chin died four days later. The two ended up pleading guilty to man-

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## Vincent Chin

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slaughter. Neither received jail time.

That's the view if you tighten your lens on just the actions of two racists on a long June night in 1982. But the context around which they acted reveals more.

### TROUBLE IN THE AUTO INDUSTRY

In 1982, the domestic auto industry was two years into a deep recession triggered by an oil crisis. Consumers voted with their wallets, and they wanted fuel-efficient vehicles. That meant imports gained market share while GM, Ford, and Chrysler lost theirs. Hundreds of thousands of UAW members who worked at those auto plants were laid off. The federal government estimates that by the end of 1982, 24 percent of U.S. autoworkers had lost their jobs. They saw their contracts being reopened to give companies concessions to keep them afloat.

Their anger was real. But what Ebens and Nitz chose to do with their anger was to transform it into a hatred of a broad category of people.

They didn't direct their anger at the employer who failed to anticipate market changes and earn back their market share. (As early as 1949, the UAW urged automakers to build fuel-efficient cars, publishing a pamphlet, "A Small Car Named Desire.") Nor at elected leaders who seemed impotent in the face of the double-dip recession.

No, they blamed their demise on an ethnicity and a race: to hell with the fact that Chin was a U.S. citizen, to hell with the fact that he was an industrial draftsman at an engineering firm in the same auto industry Nitz and Ebens worked in, to hell with the fact that they didn't know the first thing about Chin other than the shape of his eyes. That was enough to make Chin pay.

Which leads to the next part of this story, which is more diffuse and cloaked in shadow. Were Ebens and Nitz unique in their views? What was feeding their bigotry? Without question, those two men are responsible for the murder of Chin, and it is equally true that others exposed to the same culture as Ebens and Nitz did not murder Asian Americans.

But what incubated that kind of hatred? Who contributed to the con-



Photos: Jim Westphoto.com

*There was a significant culture of anti-Asian bigotry in Detroit in 1982. The nightly news featured stories of fundraisers of \$1 per swing at a Japanese vehicle ... T-shirts, bumper stickers and posters drove the point home to autoworkers: your economic insecurity is caused by the Japanese.*

ditions? Or, more to the point, who stood by and watched the toxic stew of anger and racism brewing without calling it out for what it was?

There's plenty of evidence that there was a significant culture of anti-Asian bigotry in Detroit in 1982. The nightly news featured stories of fundraisers of \$1 per swing at a Japanese vehicle as casually as reporting on adoption day at the dog pound. T-shirts, bumper stickers, and posters drove the point home to autoworkers: your economic insecurity is caused by the Japanese.

Some auto plant walls displayed graphics featuring stereotyped buck-toothed Japanese taking American jobs (it's worth noting that this same type of vitriol didn't get expressed at German Americans, despite growing market shares for Volkswagen, Daimler, and BMW).

Slurs like "Jap" and "Chink" flowed like

water on many shop floors. These were not closeted acts of bigotry — they were displayed proudly at Labor Day parades and on t-shirts worn to UAW events. And this hatred was not limited to UAW members — other members of other unions and even auto management joined in bigotry.

Confronting this bigotry is an important part of strengthening union values. We have to ask ourselves how this happened. We need to acknowledge that we failed to speak out against the vilification of a people.

It's a conversation long overdue and timely today. The voices of the Black Lives Matter movement are demanding truth and reconciliation with such a fervent urgency that the status quo of yesterday cannot remain. There has been a wave of anti-Asian action driven by the unproven belief that China was responsible for COVID-19. Muslim Americans have been targeted by bigots. And there has been an increase in violence against Jews and their synagogues.

Labor unions cannot be immune from the internal examination of their pasts that other institutions and government agencies are experiencing. But doing so — however difficult — will only prove to be another example of our labor movement honoring its commitment to solidarity.

— Sandra Engle is a member of the Program Committee of the Michigan Labor History Society and Secretary of APALA, the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance

# Unions, Students, Others Can Book Labor History Tours

Labor history tours of metro Detroit—the nation’s foremost “union town”—can be arranged for union members, the general public, students, and visitors through the Michigan Labor History Society.

A two-hour bus tour of southeast Michigan includes visits to the new Fort Street Bridge Park monument to the 1932 Hunger March (see page 1), the Woolworths store where more than a hundred women joined a 1937 sit-down strike, the Ford Piquette Model T plant, and the Labor Legacy Landmark “Transcending” on the Detroit riverfront

Alternatively, a one-hour walking tour shows visitors several sites in downtown Detroit, ending at “Transcending.” More than 3,000 people have taken these tours in the last several years, including students from the University of Richmond (shown at right).

Union groups, students, and the general public are welcome to book tours, and knowledgeable guides will be on hand to staff them free of charge. While the COVID-19 pandemic has halted the tours for the time being, they will be restarted as soon as possible.

To book a tour for a future date, contact James Pedersen, MLHS Program Committee co-chair, at 517-304-2705 or



Photo: Jackie Dick

via e-mail at [aworker4mi@gmail.com](mailto:aworker4mi@gmail.com).

## David Barr’s Legacy

David Barr, who designed the pair of arcs that anchor “Transcending,” and his wife, Beth Dwaihy, left their home and

studio to the city of Novi to maintain as an art park with a public sculpture garden and an artist in residency program. The park is located at 22600 Napier Road, Novi. A map and information is available at [www.cityofnovi.org/villabarr](http://www.cityofnovi.org/villabarr).

## Labor History Mural

A recent addition to urban art in Detroit is this vibrant mural interpreting themes of labor and social history. It takes up an entire wall of the Guadalajara Market at 1630 Lawndale St. at Logan St. in southwest Detroit.

The Michigan Labor History Society commissioned the mural, which was painted by students working with the Southwest Urban Arts Mural Project (SUAMP). The group has helped create several murals on walls throughout the area. Tours of the artworks, many of which depict Mexican-American history, can be arranged by contacting SUAMP at (313) 841-4447. MLHS includes a visit to the mural on its labor history bus tours.



Photo: Jackie Dick

## Make a Gift to Your Library or School

Do you want to help more people learn about labor history in Michigan?

Now you can donate a copy of “Labor in Michigan,” an informative and colorful publication about major labor, including a poster showing major labor history sites, to your local library or school. Just send your request to the



Michigan Labor History Society, 5401 Cass, Detroit MI 48202, or email to [Michlabor@aol.com](mailto:Michlabor@aol.com) and we’ll mail a free copy to your designated recipient.

## A Man Who Kept Labor History Alive

# MIKE KERWIN, 1924-2021

*Mike Kerwin, who died July 29 at the age of 97, was one of the founding members of the Michigan Labor History Society. Born and raised in Oak Park, Illinois, he arrived in Michigan in 1950 after serving in the Army and attending the University of Chicago.*

*As an autoworker and United Auto Workers member, he was a delegate to many union conventions and a regular presence at Labor Day parades and on picket lines. For many years he served on the staff of the UAW Education Department, teaching at the union's Black Lake education center and at local and regional union meetings. MLHS talked with Mike in 2020 as he reflected on his years as a labor activist. Here are excerpts from that conversation, edited for clarity and length.*

**MLHS:** Mike, what can you tell us about your early life?

**Kerwin:** I was born in Chicago in 1924, and grew up in Oak Park, Illinois, went to high school there, and spent three years during World War Two in the Army Air Force. I came to Detroit in 1950 and went to work at American Metal Products, where we made the metal parts for automobile seat frames. I worked there for three years, and met my wife Ann in 1953, got married, got hired by the UAW and worked there for most of the rest of my life. My job at American Metal Products was on the assembly line at first, and then taking the finished seats off of the conveyor, and sticking them on an overhead where they would go to be painted.

**MLHS:** What was your first encounter with a union?

**Kerwin:** I became a member of UAW Westside Local 174, American Metal Division 51. I became chair of the Local's Education Committee and editor of the Local's plant paper. Actually, we had four different plants represented by the local, and each unit had its own newspaper. The job of our Education Committee was to promote the union's education program in the local union.

**MLHS:** Back then, things could be a little rough and tumble. Did you have any run-ins with the authorities or company people? Were you ever arrested on a picket line?

**Kerwin:** Yes, yes, oh yes. There was a

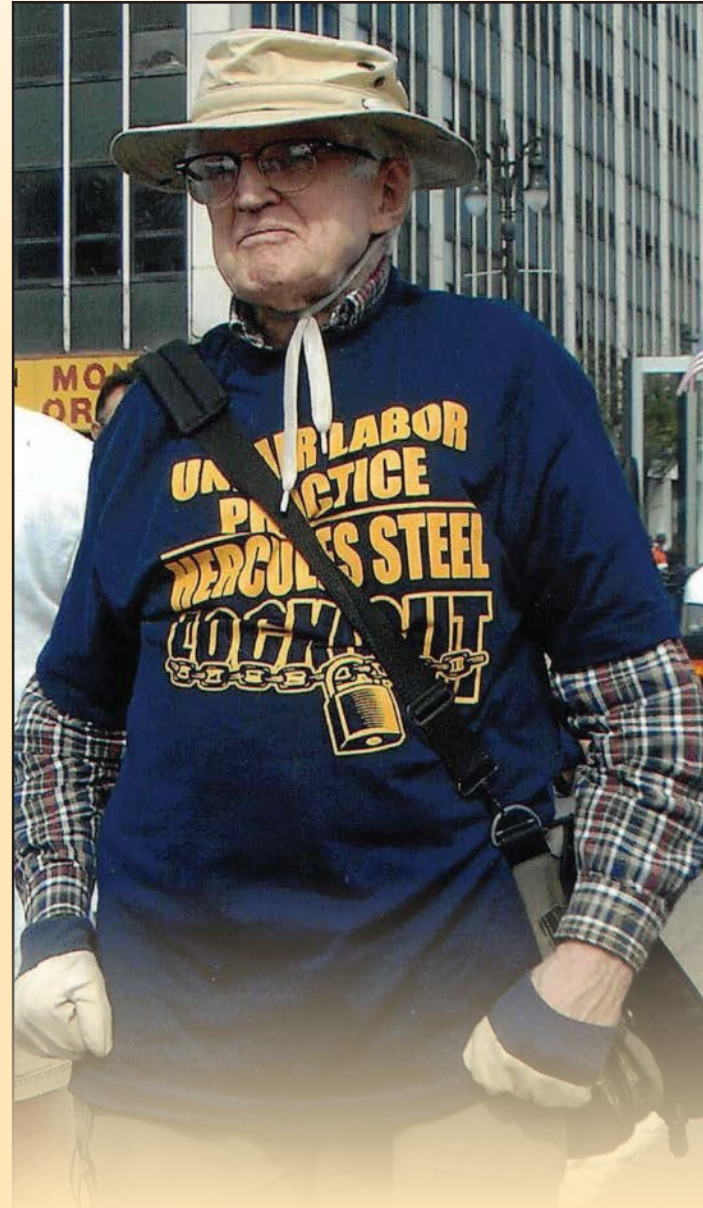
**Mike Kerwin was a regular presence in Detroit's annual Labor Day parade.**

Photo: Frank Hammer

strike at my plant the first year I was there in the fall of 1950. That was where I got arrested because they decided to take the dies and tools out of the plant so they could continue production somewhere else when we closed the plant down. I had borrowed a car and parked it in an alley down from the front gate. And they brought a truck out of that gate that turned in my direction, and I drove out in front of them, and I stopped it. And I was also arrested on picket lines here and there including down at Grand Circus Park in Detroit. I was probably known as a difficult person because I ask questions, and most people don't. It was an invigorating environment, even when we were involved in a lot of clashes.

**MLHS:** Local 174 played a big role in building the UAW, and it was the home local of [UAW leaders and brothers] Walter Reuther and Victor Reuther. Did you know them? What was Walter like?

**Kerwin:** Well, I can't say as I knew Walter personally very well. He was a very competent labor leader and a very honest guy. He had his ego, but I don't think he let it get control of him too much. I knew



Victor pretty well. I worked for Victor in the UAW Education Department. Later, he lived in Washington, and at the UAW Washington conferences, I used to take the Local 174 delegates to his house every year so they could meet him and he could talk to the guys from the West Side local, and he used to love it.

**MLHS:** You moved up from your local union's education committee to the UAW International.

**Kerwin:** Yes, first I was hired by the UAW Community Action Program, or CAP, for a couple of years. Then I got



a leave of absence to become Detroit Deputy City Clerk for eight years, and then I came back to work in the UAW Education Department in 1986, just in time for the 50th anniversary of the UAW, 1937 to 1987.

**MLHS:** What led you to become interested in labor history?

**Kerwin:** I must have become interested through the local union. As Walter and Victor Reuther's home local, there was a lot of history there. It was a pretty large factory with its own history and I was encouraged to learn it. And so I became a student of it, and when the Labor History Society started, I was attracted and became active in it.

**MLHS:** UAW Region 1B Director Ken Morris called the first conference to organize the Michigan Labor History Society. Were you there?

**Kerwin:** Yes, I was present. The goal was to organize locals in the UAW and other unions in the area to dig out and write and publish their history and to make it part of the heritage so that members, would know the history —how it came about. And it was a pretty dramatic history if you go back to the 1930s. We had a newsletter that we circulated to the locals, and we had events, speakers, and we did a fair amount of stuff at Black Lake [the UAW family education center in Onaway, Michigan].

**MLHS:** We've all seen you march in the Detroit Labor Day parade. Tell us about your connection with that event.

**Kerwin:** I'm not sure if I held an official connection with the parade, but certainly I was part of it and helped mobilize and publicize it. Every year it was a big event. The MLHS hopped onto the idea of a Labor Day mobilization luncheon and used it to promote both the parade and the society. And we still have that going on today.

**MLHS:** You came up with a new pattern for the Labor Day Parade.

**Kerwin:** Yes, the idea was that the rearmost unit would step off first, parading past all those waiting, who would then, unit by unit, fold in behind.

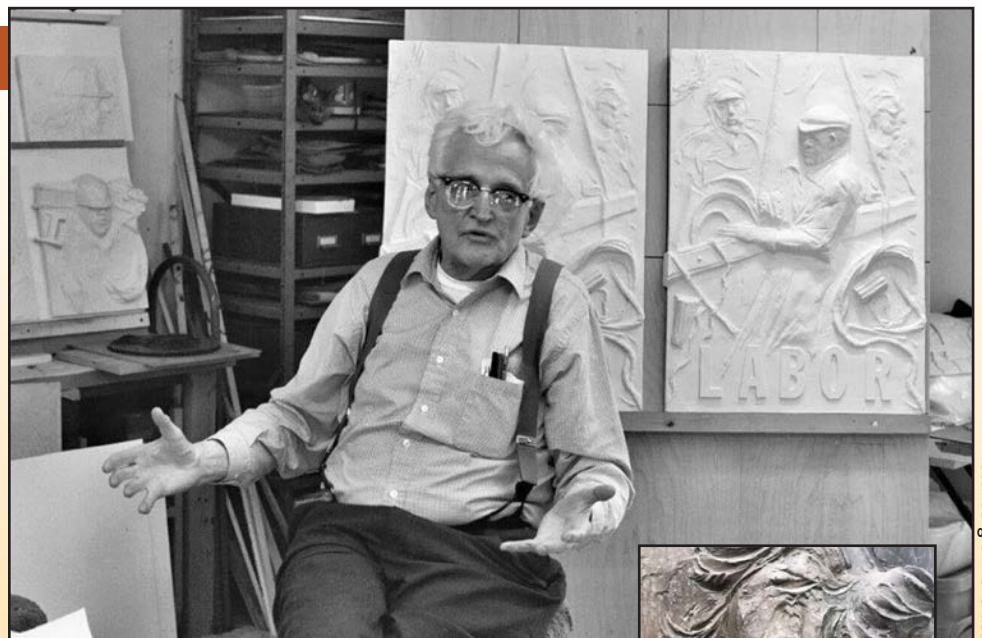


Photo: Sergio De Giusti



Kerwin Family Photo



Photo: Dave Elia

**Top, Mike Kerwin in the work studio of Sergio De Giusti, the sculptor who created the images at "Transcending," the Labor Legacy Landmark in downtown Detroit.**

**Right, this portrait of Kerwin cast in bronze is a permanent part of the Labor Legacy Landmark at Hart Plaza on Detroit's downtown riverfront.**

**Above, Kerwin demonstrates at Detroit's Cobo Hall in opposition to apartheid and in support of South African bishop Desmond Tutu, a leader in the anti-apartheid campaign.**

Thus, every unit, every union, would be able to see each other.

**MLHS:** After the parade, for many years, MLHS helped organize Laborfest. Can you explain what that was?

**Kerwin:** It was a get-together of labor, with activities put on during, and after the parade where people could be exposed to the culture of the labor movement including music, exhibits, booths. But it got to be too expensive and ended.

*Mike went on to describe other MLHS projects, including the iconic Labor Legacy Landmark on Detroit's riverfront, where his face is cast in bronze on one of the reliefs. He helped initiate the idea for this Landmark in 2001 as labor's gift to the city on the 300th anniversary of the founding of Detroit by French explorers. He described it to us as "a double arch [that] depicts the history of labor in Detroit," calling it "a good monument to labor and well-placed."*

*Mike was also a guide on MLHS labor-history bus and walking tours that have been taken by some 3,000 people over the*

*past several years. One of his legacies is the large number of local union histories that he encouraged local members to research and write. Copies of many of them are on file at the Walter Reuther Archives at Wayne State University.*

*Mike was also well known for his love of music—labor songs and traditional Irish tunes often accompanied by accordion. Many of his friends heard him serenade his wife Ann at a 50th wedding anniversary party.*

*A few years ago, he was asked to speak on labor history at Macomb Community College and, in addition to his talk, surprised the audience by singing a rousing labor hymn for which he received a long ovation. We asked him about his musical background. He told us that he played trombone in high school, saying, "We had the worst marching band but the best concert band in Chicago."*

*In Detroit, he was part of the Solidarity Singers and he helped organize a Midwest Great Labor Arts Exchange. At his memorial last summer, family and friends sang many of his favorite Irish and labor songs, including one of his favorites, "Solidarity Forever."*

# Pride, Prejudice and Ron Woods' Fight for Dignity

*What happened when a union member became the target of homophobic and anti-gay harassment at work?*

By JAMES McQUAID

On September 30, 1991, Michigan's first Cracker Barrel restaurant opened in Belleville, Michigan, just thirty minutes from downtown Detroit. The restaurant's debut was marred by clashes between hundreds of protesters and counter-protesters over Cracker Barrel's employment policies.

Earlier that year, the chain announced it would not employ individuals who "fail[ed] to demonstrate normal heterosexual values," and fired employees who were openly (or just suspected of being) homosexual, sparking outrage.

Tense standoffs between the two groups led police from Belleville and adjoining Van Buren Township to intervene.<sup>1</sup> However, the late September protest was just the first day of many in what would arguably become the largest sustained act to defend LGBTQ rights in Michigan's history.

The amalgamation of protesters, who included "gays, unionists, and others in the Detroit area," united as the "Cracker Barrel Protest Coalition,"<sup>2</sup> with Ron Woods, an electrician at Chrysler's Trenton engine plant and member of UAW Local 412, as its leader.

The coalition's demands were simple: Cracker Barrel must reverse its policy of indiscriminately firing homosexuals and rehire the employees who had been fired under the policy. Protesters met in front of the restaurant every week following that late September morning, stopping only for a short break amid the bitterest cold weather until March, 1992.<sup>3</sup>

Counter-protesters defending Cracker Barrel's policy continued to harass demonstrators, but as weeks turned into months, the number of activists participating in Woods' coalition swelled into the hundreds. Executives at Cracker Barrel were forced to admit defeat and rescind their anti-gay policy later that

**UAW member Ron Woods pickets Chrysler Corporation headquarters in 1991 to protest harassment of LGBTQ workers.**

## Trouble in the Workplace

While Ron Woods' allies cheered his initiative in organizing such demonstrations, his activism also made him an easy target for anti-gay bigotry. Shortly after local news outlets published his name, picture, and occupation while covering the autumn protests, Woods became the victim of homophobic and anti-gay harassment at work.

Often initiated and egged on by management, fellow workers physically attacked Woods on several occasions; the most egregious of these attacks was instigated by a self-admitted Klansman. An area manager at the Trenton plant and alleged friend of the Klansman also assaulted Woods.<sup>4</sup> When it became clear that Chrysler would not address the attacks and protect Woods, the union stepped in. The UAW threatened to have the perpetrators fired if they continued. A decline in incidents followed after local union officers "read the riot act" to perpetrators.<sup>5</sup>

Still, the abuse did not go away entirely, and the UAW fought to have Woods transferred to the new Chrysler Technology Center, which eventually became Chrysler's World Headquarters. Woods later remarked that the UAW's commitment to his transfer likely saved his life. While management at the new tech center repeated much of the same harassment Woods faced at his old plant, he and the UAW were ready to combat

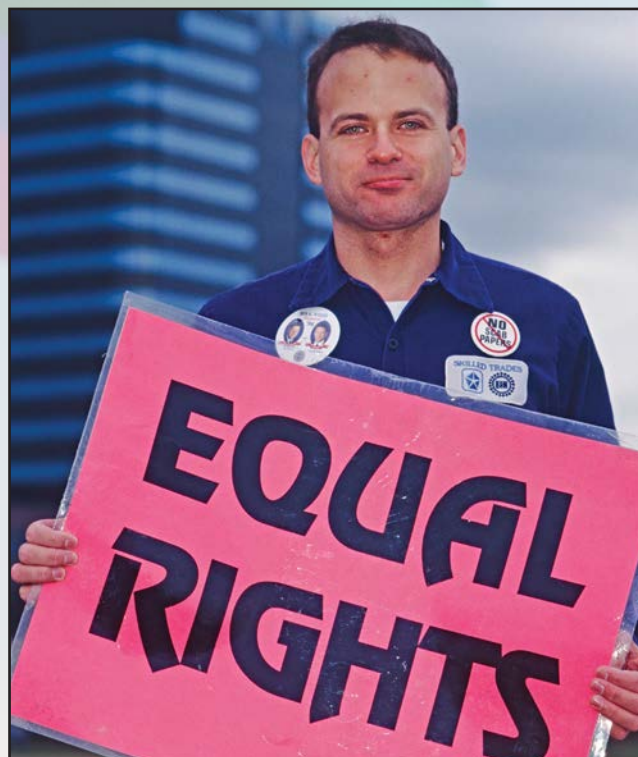


Photo: Jim Westphoto.com

it. Over the next few years, Woods made a name for himself at the tech center as a committed unionist, earning the respect of his union brothers and sisters.

At the UAW's national convention in June, 1992 delegates voted to expand the union constitution's anti-discrimination language by adding the words "age, handicap, marital status or sexual orientation." The UAW's *Solidarity* magazine ran a two-page spread, "Pride and Prejudice," a story about Woods' battles, by assistant editor Michael Funke. The story, one of the few in labor media to address homophobia at that time, won a top award from the International Labor Communications Association.

Woods ran for delegate to the UAW's 31st Constitutional Convention in 1995 against four other candidates, and his well-known commitment to the union and advancing workplace dignity and respect led to a landslide victory. The past unit



**Pickets marched in front of Cracker Barrel in Belleville after the restaurant announced a policy against hiring gay workers. When Ron Woods was identified as one of the protesters, it led to harassment at the Chrysler factory where he worked.**

president, one of Wood's worst anti-gay tormentors following his move to the tech center, lost to Woods by a 3-1 margin.<sup>6</sup>

At the convention, Woods called on the UAW to demand contract language on equal rights for workers regardless of sexual orientation. The resolution passed unanimously and, owing to the continued lobbying of UAW leaders, members, and activists throughout the next year, Chrysler was forced to adopt nondiscrimination language protecting sexual

orientation in its next contract. The UAW won further victories in 1999, when the union convinced DaimlerChrysler to participate in feasibility studies for same-sex partner benefits, ultimately paving the way for their full implementation the following year.

— James McQuaid is a PhD candidate at Wayne State University's Department of History and is currently completing a dissertation on queer history in the United Auto Workers.

**'Out at Work'**

The film "Out at Work" tells the stories of how workers reacted to harassment and discrimination against LGBT workers, including Ron Woods. The film is available for streaming or purchase as a DVD from New Day Films at [www.newday.com](http://www.newday.com) and may be available for streaming from your local library through the Kanopy program.

Photo: Jim Westphoto.com

<sup>1</sup> Deb Price, "Perseverance Gains Cracker Barrel Gift," *The Detroit News*, December 23, 2002

<sup>2</sup> Frank Bruni, "Gays Protest Restaurant Debut," *The Detroit Free Press*, September 30, 1991

<sup>3</sup> Ron Woods, interview with Miriam Frank, April 27, 1995, *Out in the Union: Gays and Lesbians in the Labor Movement Oral History Collection*, Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives; "Restaurant Picketed," *The Detroit News*, March 30, 1992

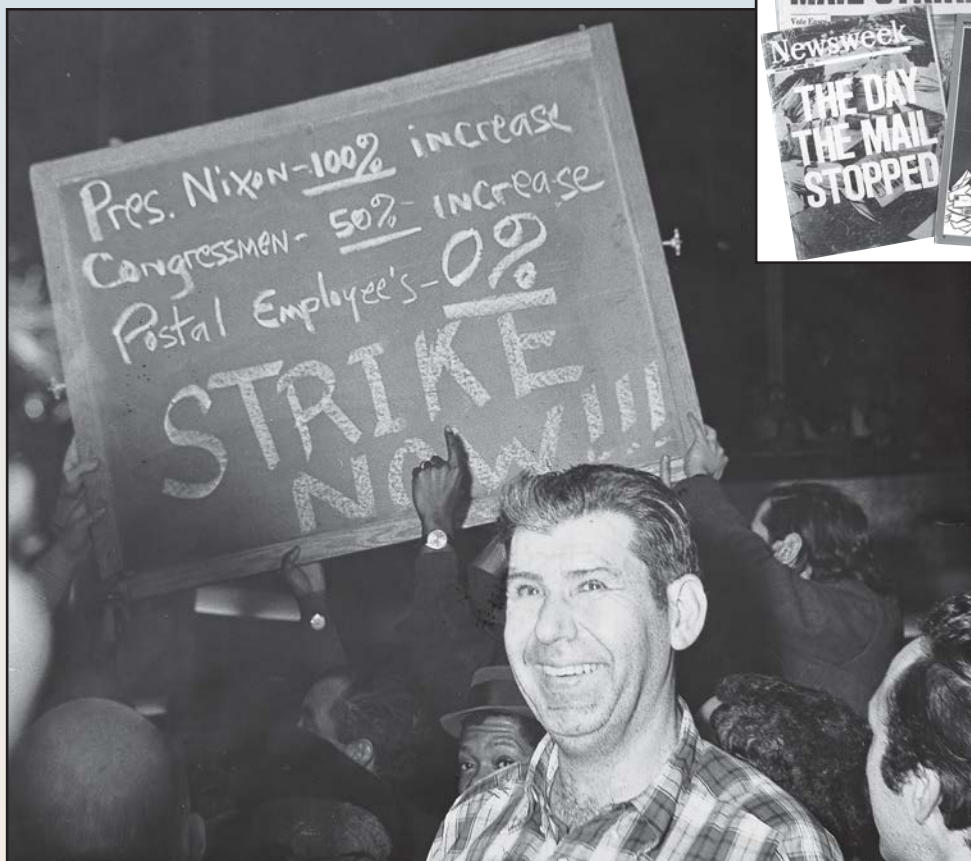
<sup>4</sup> Ron Woods, "Horror Stories Endured by Chrysler Workers," e-mail to Campaign for Equal Rights at Chrysler, December 10, 1996. Accessed via web March 27, 2018

<sup>5</sup> Miriam Frank, *Out in the Union: A Labor History of Queer America* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2015), 40.

<sup>6</sup> Membership Meeting, October 7, 1995. Labor Notes Records, Box 4, Folder 8, Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University

# How Postal Carriers Won the Right to Bargain

*More than fifty years ago, Michigan letter carriers were among thousands who struck the U.S. Postal Service.*



letter carriers to be campaign workers to keep their jobs.

Carriers sought help from local politicians, sending delegates to lobby Congress. A breakthrough in the movement came in 1881, the year that President James A. Garfield was assassinated by a disappointed office seeker.

In response, Congress passed the Pendleton Act, requiring federal workers to qualify for their positions rather than be appointed. Importantly, it also made these jobs permanent. Carriers could no longer be hired or fired based on political alliances.

This basic protection guaranteed, the letter carriers grew bolder. Without a union, they continued to petition Congress for help. With mail delivery 365 days a year, carriers pushed for a vacation law. Congressman Samuel Cox helped pass legislation giving all carriers a 15-day annual paid vacation. He also helped establish a regular pay scale for carriers.

## Carriers Organize

However, many in government still believed postal workers should not have the same rights as other workers. When Congress passed an eight-hour-day law for all federal “laborers, workmen and mechanics,” the Post Office Department refused to comply. Congress overrode the Department, ordering an eight-hour day for postal workers. This experience helped letter carriers understand that they might always be undervalued without a union to represent them. And so, in 1889, they organized the National Association of Letter Carriers.

Still, letter carriers continued to face challenges. After his election in 1901, President Theodore Roosevelt established a system to spy on postal workers and charge them with trivial and malicious accusations. He issued a 1902 gag order prohibiting postal and federal employees from lobbying members of

**Letter carrier strikes were held all over the U.S. in March 1970.**

Photo: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:US\\_Postal\\_Strike\\_1970-\\_apwu.tif](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:US_Postal_Strike_1970-_apwu.tif)

BY JACKIE DICK

During the past year, as the COVID-19 pandemic limited mass gatherings, Michigan’s postal unions organized a novel demonstration against threatened postal service cuts. Instead of mounting a picket line or holding in-person rallies, they called on members and supporters to surround Detroit’s main post office with a convoy of cars and trucks. Supporters drove dozens of vehicles down Fort Street, south to Jefferson Ave., and back repeatedly.

The demonstration came a little more than fifty years after a wildcat strike by postal workers that hit not only Detroit’s postal facilities but post offices across the United States. It also occurred 122

years after the founding of the National Association of Letter Carriers, which represents thousands of carriers in Michigan.

Letter carriers organized the NALC in 1889, seeking to challenge the difficult working conditions they then faced. Early carriers earned just two cents per letter delivered, but received no compensation when customers retrieved their own mail from their post office.

Even more troubling, carrier jobs were politically tied to each presidency. After his election in 1829, President Andrew Jackson sought to fire all federal employees, including postal workers, in order to appoint only those whom he saw as political allies. This practice, which became known as the “spoils system,” expected



## Film: 'Conversations Along a Postal Route'

Filmmaker Pam Sporn's film, "Detroit 48202: Conversations Along a Postal Route," follows letter carrier Wendell Watkins (shown at left) along his route on the near west side of Detroit. The film examines the racial and economic segregation in Michigan's largest city, while looking toward solutions to create an inclusive and equitable society. Detroit jazz musician A. Spencer Barefield provides some of the music in the film.

A description of the film and information about purchasing or streaming is at [newday.com/film/Detroit-48202-conversations-along-postal-route](http://newday.com/film/Detroit-48202-conversations-along-postal-route)

Congress, despite their Constitutional right to do so.

The next administration also supported this "gag" order, stating that, "government employees are a privileged class," and it is "entirely reasonable to impose conditions" on them "that ought not be imposed upon those who serve private employers." In 1912, Congress enacted the Lloyd-LaFollette Act rescinding the gag order and ending ten years of repression. But there was a trade-off: a last-minute addition prohibited carriers from striking.

During the 1920s and 1930s, letter carriers continued to suffer low wages. In 1924, Congress voted to raise annual wages by \$300, but despite passing both Houses by an overwhelming majority, President Calvin Coolidge vetoed the bill.

Coolidge's successors, Presidents Herbert Hoover and Franklin Roosevelt, reduced postal carrier wages still further, and the Postmaster General reduced delivery service to both homes and businesses. In the 1950s, President Dwight Eisenhower vetoed a bipartisan bill to increase wages.

Postal workers hoped for relief with the creation of a Labor-Management Cooperation Program and the Comparability Act of 1962, which promised that wages for postal employees would keep pace with the private sector. During President Lyndon Johnson's administration, however, postal workers were offered only a 3.6-percent pay increase.

## Walkouts Start

By the late 1960s, postal carriers were tired of "collective begging," as

one worker put it. Carriers knew that incoming President Richard Nixon would not be any more sympathetic to their needs and began to mobilize and talk of strikes. Then-NALC President James Rademacher met with Nixon, but with little results. And so, letter carriers began protests and work stoppages, starting in New York City. Rademacher met with members of NALC Branch 36 in Manhattan and the Bronx who had voted to strike. On March 18, 1970, walkouts began and over 25,000 clerks and drivers honored the picket lines. Soon, carriers in Detroit, Boston, Philadelphia, and across the nation had joined the strike.

Return-to-work orders were issued and ignored. Nixon declared a national emergency, sending 25,000 troops to New York to move the mail. According to one striker, route tapes were removed from the cases, preventing the soldiers from sorting the mail.

After eight days on the picket line, carriers returned to work while negotiations began. The result was the Postal Reorganization Act, finally ensuring collective bargaining. Congress approved a 6-percent retroactive pay raise, binding arbitration, and faster promotions.

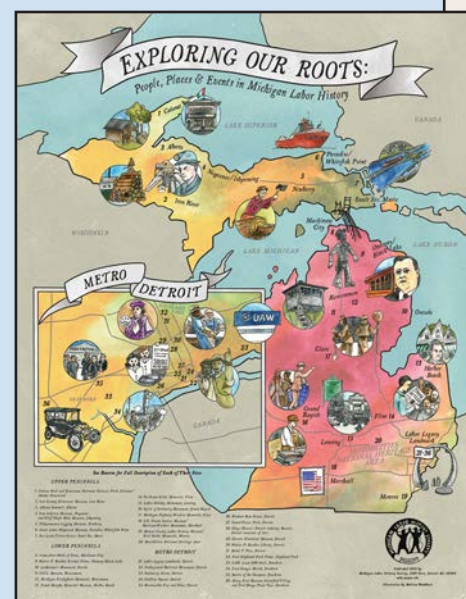
That strike, over fifty years ago, finally established many of the rights letter carriers enjoy today, even as the postal system is once again under attack. Now, looking to the past, workers may see a path forward and a way to protect this vital service for the American people.

—Jackie Dick is a retired letter carrier and a member of the Michigan Labor History Society program committee.

## Plan Your Own Labor History Journey

A limited number of labor history maps of Michigan are still available, pointing the way to dozens of interesting places — worksites, memorials, museums, and more — where working people shaped our history.

Get one of these colorful poster-size maps, with descriptions of each site, by sending \$5 with your name and address to the Michigan Labor History Society, 5401 Cass Ave., Detroit MI 48202.



# Michigan Labor's Long Road Toward Health Care for All

*Before 1940, most insurance companies believed that health wasn't insurable. Michigan labor challenged that notion, paving the way for the group insurance plans that many workers continue to enjoy.*

BY TIM LASKOWSKI

In March 1937, Chrysler workers, encouraged by the victory of General Motors workers at the Flint sit-down strike, occupied a half-dozen Detroit-area factories, the largest being the Dodge Main plant straddling the Hamtramck-Detroit border. Their goal: recognition of the United Auto Workers as bargaining agent and negotiations for a first contract.

Three years after their victory, workers began to explore how to win health-care benefits for Chrysler workers. At that time, autoworkers, like most Americans, were on their own when it came to pay-

ing for health care. On October 6, 1940 Chrysler and the UAW began a contract conference to study the issue. L.M. Gilbert, UAW Local 227, served as chairman along with Sam Levine, Local 51; John Singler, Local 51; Jack G. Russel, Local 7; Walter B. Homicz, Local 3; and Charles Murphy, Local 490.

The committee began its task with virtually a blank slate. At that time only 10 percent of Americans were covered by any form of health insurance, usually through a variety of experiments in group medical prepayment services. Michigan Hospital Service, a company that would later become Blue Cross, had been the first to offer a form of health insurance —

what it called a "Hospital Plan" — issuing its first policy on March 17, 1939. The Michigan Medical Service, which later became Blue Shield, followed by offering a "Medical Plan" on March 1, 1940.

Although the establishment of group health insurance faced bitter opposition from organized medicine, the UAW members on the Chrysler committee were determined to persevere, often meeting after a hard day's work in the plant (there were no full-time union local representatives then. Members at best had a high-school education and had no health-care experts to consult. But working with the International union leadership that had been formed just a few years earlier, they moved forward to find a solution to the problem.

They promptly sent a request-for-proposal (RFP) to all interested parties, the kind of document that still today serves as a benchmark for purchasing health insurance. Ultimately, only two companies responded — Aetna and Michigan Hospital/Michigan Medical Service. Other companies resented the notion that a union should have a voice in the operation of an insurance plan. Ultimately, only one company would offer a plan with union input. The committee studied the proposal, made by Michigan Hospital/Michigan Medical Service, and recommended it in February 1941.

The committee's work was far from over, as these first benefit plans were not comprehensive; moreover, the employees had to pay the full premium with no help from the employer. It would take another

## Labor Mobilization Lunch Hears Bill Fletcher, Jr.

More than 150 members and guests attended the 2021 Labor Mobilization Luncheon sponsored by the Michigan Labor History Society on August 25, 2021, the first in-person MLHS event since the beginning of the Covid pandemic.

Speaking via a live video hookup from his home in Washington, D.C., former AFL-CIO education director Bill Fletcher, Jr. challenged the audience to continue forging alliances with progressive movements for social and economic justice, and saluted the many essential workers who have served the public during the years-long pandemic. The audience, meeting in an open-sided pavilion at UAW Region 1's headquarters in Warren, also saw a short video of an interview with Mike Kerwin, one of the MLHS's founders, who passed away in July. (Excerpts from the interview are published elsewhere in this issue.)

James Pedersen, co-chair of the MLHS program committee, encouraged members to distribute MLHS publications and posters to their local union members and others, and to sign up for the Association's labor-history bus and walking tours that will resume once the pandemic subsides and it is safe to take tours again.

Among other projects, MLHS is planning to use one of the walls at the Labor Legacy Landmark to memorialize front-line workers who lost their lives to COVID-19. The listings can be part of future Workers Memorial Day observances.

## One Union's Example: A Path to Equality In the Building Trades

10 years before companies began to pay a percentage of the premium. In 1947, Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act, which allowed the establishment of health and welfare funds controlled equally by labor and management. In 1953, retirees' benefits started to emerge, but again they had to pay 100 percent of the premium. It wasn't until 1964 that companies started to pay a full premium for all.

By the mid-1970s, labor's vision for health care for workers began to take hold. Unions won contracts that would provide comprehensive health care for all covered workers, with few or no out-of-pocket costs. Ancillary benefits such as dental, vision, and durable medical equipment began to emerge.

Unfortunately, by the late 1980s, benefit plans were starting to come under attack as health-care costs rose. Health care became a major sticking point in many contract negotiations as costs soared, often driven by the emergence of more and more for-profit health companies. In 1941, the average health-care cost per hour was two cents. It rose to 85 cents in 1976, to \$5.50 in 2008, and today the hourly cost is close to \$10. During this time, health care transitioned from being provided by largely nonprofit/charitable organizations to hospitals and clinics operated by private corporations that seek to maximize profits.

Some of the problems that pioneering UAW-Chrysler committee set out to solve in 1940 are the same issues we face today. Labor's voice in the health-care industry has been significantly diminished, out-of-pocket costs are making health care unaffordable for many in the working class, and health care remains a major sticking point in negotiations. But in recent months, unions have once more started to mobilize to address such challenges, showing America the positive impact labor has on society. We can take inspiration from those union members who met in 1940 as we move forward to a system that can provide affordable health care for all.

—Tim Laskowski served as a member of the Michigan Labor History Society Program Committee and has spent most of his life in the labor movement and in the employee-benefits field.

*As the economy grew in Michigan in the last century, it was not easy for African Americans to find well-paying jobs. Black workers were often excluded from full membership in craft unions. Historian Steve Babson notes in Working Detroit that "white workers frequently refused to admit blacks into their unions as equals," as, for example, in the Carpenters, who although they opened their ranks to a small number of Black tradesmen, refused to let their white members work under Black foremen.*

*Much has changed over the years as unions in the building and construction trades have proactively moved to bring more African Americans, minorities, and women into the trades. Lisa Canada, a member of the Michigan Labor History Society and Legislative Director of the Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters and Millwrights, shares how her union reaches out to minority communities.*

BY LISA CANADA

The Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters (MRCC) has cultivated and participates in several programs to welcome more people of color into our membership and trades. Much of our work provides opportunities to residents of Detroit, where more than 78 percent of the population is African American.

We are full participants in the City of Detroit and Southwest Detroit Community job fairs. Our recruiters speak, and recruitment materials are printed in English and Spanish.

Several of our agents participate in programming, and we provide guest lecturers, books, curriculum, and materials to the A. Philip Randolph Career and Technical Center that welcomes all Detroit public-school students who are interested in a job in one of the many different unionized trades. After graduating high school, these students can be automatically entered into our apprenticeship program and sometimes test into their second year of the program.

We have also signed an agreement with the City of Detroit committing that for the next ten years, at least 25 percent of our incoming apprentices will be city residents, and at the same time, we will grow the number of city residents who are members of our three southeast Michigan locals. We made this agreement three years ago, and we have tallied between 27 percent and 40 percent when reporting first semester numbers. We are very proud of this STEP program and its impact to help diversify our membership.

Along with Michigan Works, our union hosts several annual summer camps for high-school students interested in seeing if being a carpenter or millwright might be right for them. Mainly Detroit schools and some suburban schools send low-in-

come students to this program to learn basic construction safety and carpentry skills that will serve them for a lifetime regardless of their chosen career. Last year participants applied their new skills to recondition front porches and install handrails improving accessibility for residents while increasing visibility of the trades in a low-income, predominantly African-American neighborhood. The program lasts for six weeks, and students are paid \$10 an hour to attend and learn. More than 80 percent of the participants are students of color, and their enthusiasm for the work is incredible. The power of this program is no more evident than in a young woman of color who, after participating as a senior in high school, became an apprentice and at 19 years old has an empowering career, healthcare, retirement benefits, and good pay, allowing her to rent her first apartment and buy a new pickup truck all with no debt to speak of.

### Training for Returning Citizens

The MRCC has also partnered with the Michigan Department of Corrections to run a carpentry program at Parnall Correctional Facility in Jackson for soon-to-be returning citizens to learn our trade before their release. When they are released, they are already employed with good wages and benefits the minute they leave the facility. After five years, 60 returning citizens have graduated from the program, all remain employed in the trade, and not one has reoffended. Almost all participants are people of color.

We work with the Detroit Civil Rights Department and Michigan Works to run pre-apprenticeship programs bringing potential trades candidates up to speed so that they can qualify to apply for our apprenticeship program. Participants

Continued on back cover



# MICHIGAN LABOR HISTORY SOCIETY

c/o Walter P. Reuther Library • Wayne State University  
5401 Cass Avenue • Detroit, MI 48202



## 90th Anniversary March Saturday, March 5 • 5 pm

The 90th anniversary of the Ford Hunger March will be observed with a brief ceremony at the Fort Street Bridge Park, near where the marchers gathered, Oakwood Blvd. and Fort St. in Detroit. The program will be followed by a march down Miller Road to UAW Local 600 for a commemorative program.

### Installing New Plaques



New plaques honoring donors have been installed on the wall of honor at the Labor Legacy Landmark on Detroit's riverfront.

The Michigan Labor History Society hopes to list the names of

workers who have lost their lives due to COVID or from workplace accidents in connection with future Workers Memorial Day observances.

### Building Trades

*Continued from page 15*

require a GED and a driver's license and are expected to be punctual and take direction. These programs, again reaching many people of color, are held in several locations. The City of Detroit helps us fund and solve problems like transportation and advertising.

Last but not least, our union invested more than \$32 million to build a 120,000 square foot training center in the City of Detroit. We located our building in a neighborhood with excellent visibility, but that hasn't seen investment in decades. Now, as we open our doors, it will be home to many of the programs described here, providing easier access for Detroit residents and a continuing presence that puts a world-class, tuition-free trades education within reach.

## HISTORY IS WAITING TO BE MADE...

The Michigan Labor History Society seeks to tell the story of our state's labor history, honoring our past and looking to the future.

We believe that studying our history shows us how Michigan workers can achieve a level of financial security, including fair wages, comprehensive benefits, stable employment, due process, safe working conditions, and job security. We believe these goals should extend to all workers, not just those with union cards.

Through our publications, our bus and walking tours, our meetings and public events, we seek to expand the knowledge of labor history among workers, students, and the general public. Our Labor Legacy Landmark on the Detroit riverfront has introduced thousands of visitors to Michigan's labor history, and our map of labor history sites in Michigan provides a guide to our state's rich history.

### JOIN US TODAY

If you would like to become a part of the Michigan Labor History Society, there are many ways you can participate. Write stories for our publications. Serve as a guide on our tours. Speak about labor history to school classrooms. Form a committee to write your local union's history. Help us develop a permanent Workers Memorial Day monument to remember fallen workers. We can provide help and advice for all these projects.

Get in touch with us by returning the following coupon or sending us a letter at our e-mail address: [Michlabor@aol.com](mailto:Michlabor@aol.com)

**Michigan Labor History Society, 5401 Cass, Detroit MI 48202 • 313-577-4003**

I would like to join the Michigan Labor History Society.  
Enclosed is \$10 for dues.

I am interested in working with MLHS on \_\_\_ tours \_\_\_ publications  
\_\_\_ programs \_\_\_ other; please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

If a union member, which union and local \_\_\_\_\_

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