



LOCAL 211 NEWS

Union Proud from Defiance, Ohio



Our success is attributed to the rank and file—the working men and women—of our local union!
 Chartered 1948 uawlocal211.com March 2026

VOLKSWAGEN WORKERS MAKE HISTORY, RATIFY FIRST UNION CONTRACT AT MAJOR SOUTHERN AUTO PLANT



In a historic victory, Volkswagen workers have voted by 96 percent to ratify their first union contract. The deal locks in 20 percent wage increases, healthcare cost reductions, job security guarantees, an enforceable grievance procedure, and much more. The ratification vote caps a years-long campaign by Volkswagen Chattanooga autoworkers to join the UAW and win a better life with a union contract.

“Volkswagen workers have moved yet another mountain,” said UAW President Shawn Fain. “From having the courage to stand up and form their union, to having the backbone to authorize a strike and hold out for a contract that honors their worth, VW workers are leading the way for the entire labor movement and non-union autoworkers everywhere. Welcome to the UAW family.”

The over 3,000 Volkswagen workers in Chattanooga voted overwhelmingly to join the UAW in April of 2024. In October of 2025, after more than a year of negotiations, workers voted to authorize a strike in order to win a fair contract. In early February, they reached a tentative agreement with the company, which has now been ratified.

“This victory shows what happens when workers stand up and refuse to be ignored. We didn’t just win better wages and raise standards at our plant

— we forced respect onto the table and got it all in writing,” said Yogi Peoples, a Bargaining Committee member from Assembly. “Our victory here at Volkswagen should send a message to autoworkers everywhere: don’t let management divide you. When workers fight together – united and unafraid — we can beat the odds and win!”

“Southern autoworkers are standing up, and I expect many more to follow Volkswagen’s lead,” said UAW Region 8 Director Tim Smith. “Workers are done being left behind, and VW is just the first step towards justice for autoworkers everywhere. Who are we? U-A-W!”

Volkswagen workers in Chattanooga voted 3-to-1 to join the UAW in 2024, with support from the Volkswagen Works Council and IG Metall. Soon after the victory, workers elected a 20-member negotiating committee made up of their peers. After months of negotiations, the contract marks a breakthrough for nonunion autoworkers and manufacturing workers across the South. The agreement ensures that Volkswagen workers have a legally binding, enforceable contract guaranteeing fair pay, more affordable healthcare, safer working conditions, and clear protections against favoritism.

The details of the agreement are available at UAW.org/VW.



President's Report

By Ben Sabins

First, I'd like to congratulate, Rachel Cobb, Mindy Otto, Larry Cooper, Fenix Day, Kim Burill, Stephanie Armstrong, and Toby Castillo for being elected as our UAW Local 211 Election Committee. Also, I'd

like to thank Jason Nelson, Joy Mahlman, Kendra Seibert, and Rhonda Osborn for throwing their hats in the ring as well. It takes a lot of people to effectively run an election, and everyone nominated will be asked to help with the upcoming elections. Thank you for your willingness to participate.

Next, I'd like to thank the membership for allowing me to attend the 2026 UAW-GM National Council meeting and Sub-Councils. There was a ton of good information shared. Several plants face the same challenges as we do not only at GM Defiance but in all our Local 211 Units. It was good to share ideas on how to solve these challenges.

At the National Council meeting, UAW President Shawn Fain let us know that they are preparing for the 2028 negotiations and that we should expect a fight. I'd like to ask our members to put a little money away each week as an emergency fund. It's better to have it and not need it than to need it and not have it.

Vice President Mike Booth updated us about the next SAP. The 3rd SAP for this agreement will be rolled out in 2026. The details are still being finalized, but it was reported by the international union staff that we should know more in the next 30 days. We'll keep you updated as information becomes available.

At Sub council 3, we discussed grievance handling and organizing. We also heard reports from the Safety, Benefits, Research, and Employee Placement departments among others.

Automation was the top issue at Sub 5. Robots, cobots, autonomous fork trucks and burden carriers are being pushed into every facility. Safety, Ergo, and maintenance strategies, contractors and the 183 process were also discussed. All good information for us to use representing our members.

UAW Local 211 members proudly produce goods and services for our communities, our nation, and the world. Although we are very proud of what we do, it's not worth getting injured or killed for. Please work safely and look out for each other.

I'd also like to ask our members to be a little more patient and kinder to one another. At the time of this

writing, the US is in conflict with Iran, the stock market is down, and the price of oil is up.

Not only does this affect the price of gas and food, it also affects the sales of the goods and services 211 members produce. I would like to ask you to keep our service members and those in harm's way in your prayers. Global chaos and uncertainty can add stress to our already stressful lives, but remember, this too shall pass.

Our sympathy for your loss...

To our bereaved members and their families, we offer our condolences for the loss of their loved ones. We extend our sincere sympathy to the families of:

Edward Medina-Retired 9/01/2018

Doyle Elkins-Retired 1/1/2015

Joseph Wenzlick-Retired 6/1/2006

Rondald Clemens-Retired 4/1/1991

Arlen Free-Retired 8/1/1998

David Watson-Retired 3/1/1993

Mark Abbe-Retired 2/1/2014

Alfred Forester-Retired 4/1/2004



The Education Committee is offering members to receive the UAW Local 211 Newsletter via email instead of viewing it from the website. If you would like to sign up, contact us at secretary@uawlocal211.com to be placed on the email list. At this time this is the only way to sign up. Please allow 7-10 days for notification of receipt of your email.



International Women's History Month

By Local 211 Women's Committee



I'm sure that we all have a woman in our lives that we look up to. Women that have strived to make the world a better place. We could list many. This year, Local 211 Women's Committee would like to spot light some of our own women.

Donelda Royal was the first woman to hire in at GM Central Foundry on May 14, 1951. Donelda was a single mother to 6 children and hired in at 30 years old. When Donelda was hired, she was making \$54 a week. This was before the Equal Pay Act. At that time, this was five cents an hour less than the men made. Donelda worked at Central Foundry for 25 years. Donelda Royal lived to be 100 years young and credited the union for her being hired. When people would talk negatively about unions, she would tell them, "You should try it without a union sometime."

Some other women that are first's here at Local 211 are:

- Eva Schultz-Guide 1965-1967
- Mary Hartzog- Financial Sec. 1969
- Sharon Ratliff- Election Committee Chair 1996
- Sheila Vincent- Trustee 1996
- Mary Murco- Recording Secretary 1999
- Mary Murco- Vice President 2002
- Mary Wright- Sergeant At Arms 1999
- Odessa Bass- first woman iron pourer
- Pam Lively- First woman Pattern Shop
- Deb Ballard- first woman core maker
- Pearl Lane- first Committeeperson
- Ginny Dillon- longest working woman
- Sue Bany- first woman electrician
- Sarah Vogelsong- youngest millwright
- Sheri Baker-first Chair of the CA

The Women's Committee tries to do our best to represent our Local. If there are any more women that were the first's, please let us know. To all of the women out there thank you for being you and staying strong.



Thinking about becoming involved with your Local UAW Union?
Join a Committee!!
 Watch your local UAW boards and upcoming newsletter for **Committee Application deadlines.**



NEW LOCAL 211 UAW BUSINESS OFFICE HOURS

THE LOCAL 211 BUSINESS OFFICE WILL NOW BE CLOSED ON MONDAY'S AND TUESDAY'S BEGINNING ON MARCH 3, 2025

THE OFFICE WILL BE OPEN ON WEDNESDAYS, THURSDAYS AND FRIDAYS FROM 8:00 A.M. UNTIL 4:00 P.M.

LOCAL 211 UAW OFFICE PHONE NUMBER
419-784-5399

BENEFITS OFFICE PHONE NUMBER
419-784-7750

UAW LEGAL SERVICE PHONE NUMBER
1-800-482-7700

WEBSITE
uawlocal211.com

LOCAL 211 UAW EMAIL ADDRESS
secretary@uawlocal211.com



2026 National CAP Conference

by The Defiance Area UAW CAP Council

The Defiance Area UAW CAP Council attended the 2026 National CAP Conference in Washington DC. Tim Smith, Director of Region 8 welcomed the delegates on Sunday to not only the conference but also his region. Tim gave us an update on things happening in his region, Volkswagen UAW members just got their first contract in the south. There are more workers wanting to organize in the south because of this.

There are four main issues that the UAW will be bargaining on from now on: Wages, health care, retirement and time off. "We are done with political systems that does not put workers first."

Monday morning, Region 2B Director, David Green informed the delegates about some locals in our region and what is happening to them. Local 2359 in Lakeview Ohio, the plant that produces musical instruments will be closing. The owner is moving production to China.

Director Green then told the delegates about Local 1181. Director Green spoke of the corporate greed and how the 1% do not need more. Before Director Green introduced Shawn Fain, he said it has been the honor of his life to serve the membership and fight for the working class.

President Fain spoke on the issues that the UAW will be taking to the bargaining table. He believes these are the future of the UAW: fighting for pensions, retiree health care, product commitment, signing more members at export car companies, IPS getting a bump (along with all other sectors), getting congress to pass Medicare for ALL and protecting Social Security. President Shawn Fain spoke about how our union has always been about more than contracts. "We cannot simply go along to go along. We have to elect people that know what it's like to live paycheck to paycheck."

Income inequality is at an all time high. Over the past 40 years the UAW has lost 75% of its membership. President Fain asked us how do we rise to the occasion? We rise by understanding and educating the membership to how the billionaires have rigged the system.

First it was NAFTA, now it is the USMCA. Free trade has closed 95 million factories in the USA. American factory workers are still waiting for manufacturing to come back.

"Tariffs aren't meant for political games. We agree

with strategic tariffs. We expect results!" President Fain wanted the membership to realize that they negotiate with billionaires all of the time.

President Fain stressed how "The working class deserves better, more and a share." Our common cause in a union is UNITY. We have the support of nonunion workers because of what we stand and fight for. Some facts that President Fain brought to our attention were that during the bankruptcy, 75% of Americans said to let us fail. Now they are with us.

"The billionaires might have the money, but we've got the people. We have the real trump card. We have the power to shut sh** down!"

We keep electing corporate people, expecting them to fight for the working class. The message is, working class people need to run for office. No one will fight for the working class like a member of the working class.

Corporate profits are at an all time high. Right now, we are in the times of divide and conquer politics. As unions, we create unity. We need to use this. They want us to do anything but stick together. Unity is our #1 way to fight and they are afraid of unity.

The bad news right now is that times are hard, the good news is that we have the power.

May Day 2028, the international will be going to the bargaining table and coming for corporate America. Main topics of bargaining will be:

- 1 Living wage- 1% has as much money as 95% of humanity
- 2 Health Care- we live in the richest nation in the world; it should be a right in this country.
- 3 Dignified retirement- this should be a human right, Walter Ruether said "Too old to work, too young to die". We want to make sure everyone is working to live and not living to work"
- 4 Technology- we are going to use it to advance ourselves and not for them to take our jobs.

"We are coming for you in everyway we can. At the bargaining table all the way to the ballot box." Shawn Fain

RETIREE SPOTLIGHT If you like to be featured in the "Retiree Spotlight" or know someone who would please contact the UAW Hall (419) 784-5399 or email Tina Cattell at secretary@uawlocal211.com.



Union-Made in America Pet Treats and Products



We know you love your pet and want to make sure they get the best treats and other products. But you also can make sure that when you are treating your pets right, you also are treating working families right. Check out our list of pet products made by members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers (BCTGM) and the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW).

BCTGM

- Alpo
- Chew-eez
- Fancy Feast
- Milk-Bone
- Purina Mills Animal Feeds
- Purina Beneful
- Purina Cat Chow
- Purina Dog Chow
- Purina One
- Purina Pro Plan
- Purina Puppy Chow

UFCW

- 9 Lives
- Alpo
- Anchor
- Beggin' Strips
- Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc.
- Chew-eez
- Fancy Feast
- Fresh Step
- Friskies
- Litter Green
- Milk-Bone dog biscuits
- Nature's Recipe
- Purina Animal Feeds
- Purina Beneful
- Purina Cat Chow
- Purina Dog Chow
- Purina Pro Plan
- Purina Puppy Chow
- Sanderson Farms
- Skippy
- Snausages
- Tidy Cat's
- Wayne Farms



With upcoming Elections,
please make sure your
mailing address on file
with the UAW Local is correct.

United Auto Workers
Amalgamated Local 211
2120 Baltimore Road
Defiance, Ohio 43512



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**UAW Local 211 Unit Meetings
Please confirm exact dates and times.**

General Motors

Active, Wednesday, April 1 (UAW Hall)

Retiree, Thursday, April 2 (UAW Hall)

Herbert E. Orr

Tuesday, May 5 (Paulding Fire House)

Midwest Community FCU

Wednesday, April 1 (UAW Hall)

Sims Metal Management

NO MEETING SCHEDULED (UAW Hall)

Johns Manville

Tuesday, May 5 (UAW Hall)

Powers & Sons Wednesday, April 8 (Rilla's Recreation House)

DFM Monday, May 11 (UAW Hall)

Teijin Automotive Technologies Monday, April 13 (USW Hall, Van Wert)

Defiance Area UAW CAP Council Tuesday, March 17

Local 211 News

Official Publication of
United Auto Workers,
Amalgamated Local 211

Visit uawlocal211.com.



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Here's a reminder! If you find a mistake in *Local 211 News*, please realize that we have not included it on purpose. But, if you feel inclined, bring it to our attention and every attempt will be made to correct it.



Local 211 News
is proudly printed
by Keystone Press,
Toledo, Ohio.