

Rank And File
The UAW Local 3047

NEWSLETTER

Women's History Month

March, 2024

The Most Dangerous Woman In America

Submitted By: Tyler Mills



When she asked the Philadelphia newspapers why no one was reporting on the child labor conditions in the textile mills, Mary Harris “Mother” Jones was told that the reporters were being snuffed. The reporters explained to her that the mill owners have stock in the papers, and they were preventing this story from being published. Hearing this, the once dubbed “Most Dangerous Woman In America” scoffed. Her response was as follows, “I have stock in these little children, and I’ll arrange a little publicity.” She then set off to work to begin organizing one of the largest displays of worker power in American history. The March of the Mill Children.

Beads of sweat began to form on a young boy's forehead as the scorching summer sun beat down on him carrying his sign reading “We Want to Go to School”, marching down the streets of Philadelphia. Flanked by hundreds of other children, some as young as 8 years old, this boy was a textile mill worker from the Kensington Neighborhood. Despite missing two of his fingers from an accident on the floor, he was forced to work in the mill, or risk his family starving as his father died to the very factory conditions he now finds himself in for sixty hours a week. While child labor laws did exist in 1903, prohibiting children under the age of twelve from working in factories in Pennsylvania, there was little enforcement. Living conditions often forced mothers to lie about their children's ages in order to supplement their income in order to survive.



catalyst for dramatic social change.

The final destination of the march, President Theodore Roosevelt's summer home at Sagamore Hill, would become the final stamp of the action. Several of the children crawled into cages, as a form of protest, to show how corporate executives viewed them as property in their treatment on the job. The media spectacle that followed would forever change the working landscape in America. The following year, in 1904, the National Child Labor Committee was formed to advocate for the end to child labor. The culmination came thirty-three years later, when the New Deal banned child labor in the United States with the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938.

“Philadelphia’s mansions were built on the broken bones, the quivering ears and drooping heads of these children...Someday the workers will take possession of your city hall, and, when we do, no child will be sacrificed on the altar of profit!”

Mother Jones had immigrated to Canada as a child while her family was fleeing from the Great Famine in Ireland. In her twenties, she worked as a dressmaker in Chicago before moving to Memphis, Tennessee where she met her husband, George Jones, a prominent member and organizer for the International Molders and Foundry Workers Union of North America. After having four children with her husband, the yellow fever pandemic of 1867 would claim the lives of Mother Jones' entire family.

Following that tragic loss, Jones traveled back to Chicago to start her own dressmaking business. Her unionist ideology would truly spark during this time as she watched the wealthy and prosperous come through her shop, only to look out the window to see the destitute and unemployed struggling to survive. She would experience more loss herself as, four years after the death of her family, all of her possessions were destroyed in the Great Chicago Fire of

1871. Jones, like many others, began the process of rebuilding the city, and led her to join the Knights of Labor, a labor federation founded in 1869. From that day on, her loyalty and focus would be focused on the pursuit of furthering the labor movement in America.

"I would look out of the plate glass windows and see the poor, shivering wretches, jobless and hungry, walking alongside the frozen lake front. The tropical contrast of their condition with that of the tropical comfort of the people for whom I sewed was painful to me. My employers seemed neither to notice nor to care."

Regardless of being in a time when women were not even allowed to vote, Mary Jones began organizing strikes across the country, failing as often as she succeeded, she was tenacious and truly passionate about the cause. She was once quoted as saying, "You don't need the vote to raise hell!" Organizing more than a million members, the pinnacle of the Knights of Labor would end with the Haymarket Massacre of 1886. During a peaceful strike effort at Haymarket Square in Chicago, workers from the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company were demanding an eight hour work day. During the strike at least one worker was killed and several injured at the hands of company hired strikebreakers. Riot police were deployed to break up the strike, when an unknown person threw a stick of dynamite, causing officers to open fire. The explosion and ensuing gunfire that followed from police ended the bloody day with seven officers, and at least four civilians dead with dozens others wounded. The events of that day would lead to many members moving to other organizations following intense public pressure. The Knights of Labor would finally dissolve in 1949.

Jones would join the United Mine Workers as an organizer following her time in Chicago. She would continuously gather together working miners and speak of better wages and working conditions for themselves and their families. Giving charismatic speeches raising people together towards the goal of a better life. As the miners would go out on strike, the company would call upon brutal tactics and intimidation to attempt to break the spirits of the miners. Jones stood tall and called upon the men to hold their ground, "If it is a question of strike or go into slavery, then I say strike until the last one of us drops into our graves." This earned her the affectionate nickname Mother Jones.



Following her historic March of the Mill Children in 1903, new membership skyrocketed during this time, and the strike success rate continued to improve, as organization efforts continued to expand throughout the country. Mother Jones quickly became notorious amongst the capitalist class and political figures, being banished from whole towns because of her effective union organization skills. Following the Ludlow Massacre of 1914, when national guard fired upon striking Colorado coal miners killing 20 people - mostly women and children - Jones spread the story across the nation, eventually being summoned to the United States Congress to testify. When she was denounced on the Senate floor for being the "grandmother of all agitators", she responded by saying that she hoped that she would "live long enough to become the great-grandmother of all agitators."

Mother Jones would continue her fight for workers rights well into her 80's, making her final strike appearance in Chicago, 1924, holding the line in support of striking dressmakers. She died on November 30th, 1930 in Silver Springs, Maryland. She is now buried at Union Miners Cemetery in Mount Olive, Illinois.



Sources:

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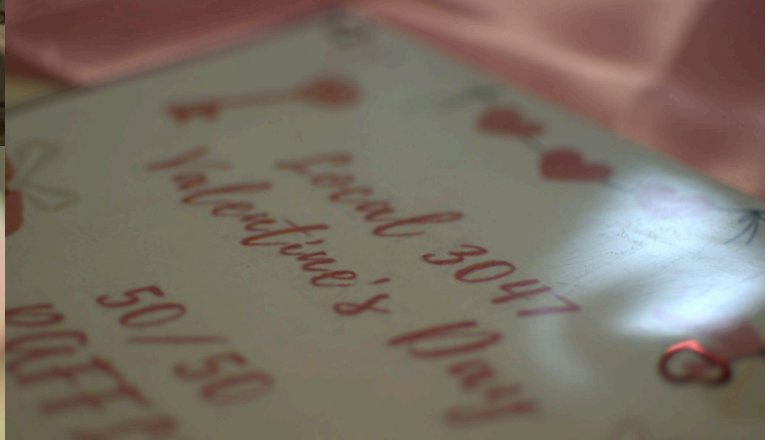
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Valentine's Day Dance



March 2024 Calendar

					1) First Day of Women's History Month	2)
3)	4)	5)	6)	7)	8) International Women's Day	9)
10)	11)	12)	13)	14) Pi Day	15)	16)
17) St. Patrick's Day	18)	19)	20)	21)	22)	23)
24) Spring Festival - Union Hall	25)	26)	27)	28)	29)	30)
31)						

Stand-Up 2.0 Update

Another New Organizing Campaign Goes Public

The first quarter of 2024 is upon us. Across the nation, from rural small towns to the highest halls of power, the power of solidarity is making itself known. Major non-union automakers are continuing to gain momentum in their own fight for recognition of their union. Despite desperate attempts to deceive workers by corporate special interests, such as the National Right To Work Foundation, **less than sixty days after announcing their organizing drive, over half of workers at Volkswagen Chattanooga have signed union authorization cards.** Despite aggressive union busting tactics and intimidation from the Governor, workers will soon have an organizing rally to continue gathering community support for their union. ¹

A little farther south, in Vance, Alabama, is the largest Mercedes-Benz manufacturing plant in the United States. Workers at MBUSI (Mercedes-Benz U.S. International) have just announced that they have also achieved this milestone. “There comes a time when enough is enough,” stated Jeremy Kimbrell, a worker at Mercedes, in a video announcement posted to youtube in late February. “We have learned that we cannot trust Mercedes with our best interests,” Kimbrell then proceeds to discuss some of the grievances the workers have with the company from a two-tier pay scale to egregious abuse of temporary workers. Our brothers and sisters at Mercedes have become the second major non-union automaker to have over half of its workers organized.²

Troy, Missouri is home to a crucially important Toyota manufacturing plant that just became the first to officially launch their organizing campaign reaching 30% of signatures. Workers at the plant, who make the cylinder head for every one of the famously reliable Toyota engines, tell stories of horrific injuries that they have received on the job. *Torn rotator cuffs requiring surgery and being told to return to work after only a weekend of rest.* One worker spoke about how she **fractured her skull** and has suffered from **debilitating migraines** ever since. Workers are fed up with how the company treats them, and they are tired of not being compensated for the quality work that they do. Even with the “UAW-Bump” of a 9% raise following Big Three negotiations, their wages and benefits compare woefully short in comparison. We wish our future brothers and sisters luck in their organizing drive, and have the support of the United Auto Workers behind them.³

All 14 auto companies are feeling their workers stand up. Over ten thousand workers have signed authorization cards with the UAW since the launch of the Stand Up 2.0 Campaign. This unprecedented surge is the continuation of the revival of workers rising to the challenge in front of them. With the odds stacked against us all, from corporate money and legal muscle, to a questionable labor code, the movement is sure to continue to meet resistance to the reclamation of basic dignity; but, to quote Recording Secretary Randy Whelan, “it’s hard to break a bundle,” and the solidarity of workers will continue encourage us all to move forward and to fight for a better life.

¹<https://uaw.org/we-are-the-majority-workers-at-mercedes-benzs-largest-us-plant-announce-majority-support-for-movement-to-join-uaw/>

² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=veWH_3VNNpk

³ <https://uaw.org/we-keep-toyota-running-workers-at-critical-toyota-plant-launch-campaign-to-join-the-uaw/>

Local News

Negotiations to Continue in Bowling Green

At Local 3047, negotiations have moved to neutral ground to begin the economic portion of the contract talks. During this portion of negotiations, bargaining committees from Local 3047 and Local 3063 from Metalsa-Hopkinsville, will be meeting with the company bargaining team to begin discussions on the compensation packages for their respective local unions. Please stay tuned for further information on the continued status of negotiations and look to the official local union board for further updates from the bargaining committee.

As the deadline of May 1st continues to move closer, we must look at what duties will be required of members should we be unable to reach a fair contract with the company. In the event that the company forces us to engage in strike action, every dues paying member will be expected to perform certain duties including: picketing, kitchen duty, or strike captain. The community service committee, as well as representatives from UAW international, will be responsible for delegating strike assignments, determining how many hours will be required to fully man every gate as necessary, as well as organizing strike benefits for the membership. Strike benefits will be given upon completion of required strike assignment and will include \$500 per week, starting day one, as well as medical benefits being covered by International.

No one ever wants to go on strike, this situation is no different. But this Local Union is not benign, and we will stand up for ourselves and what we deserve. With our demands on the table, the next move is up to the company, to offer us a fair deal that reflects the sacrifice and determination of the workforce at Local 3047. Time to Stand Up.

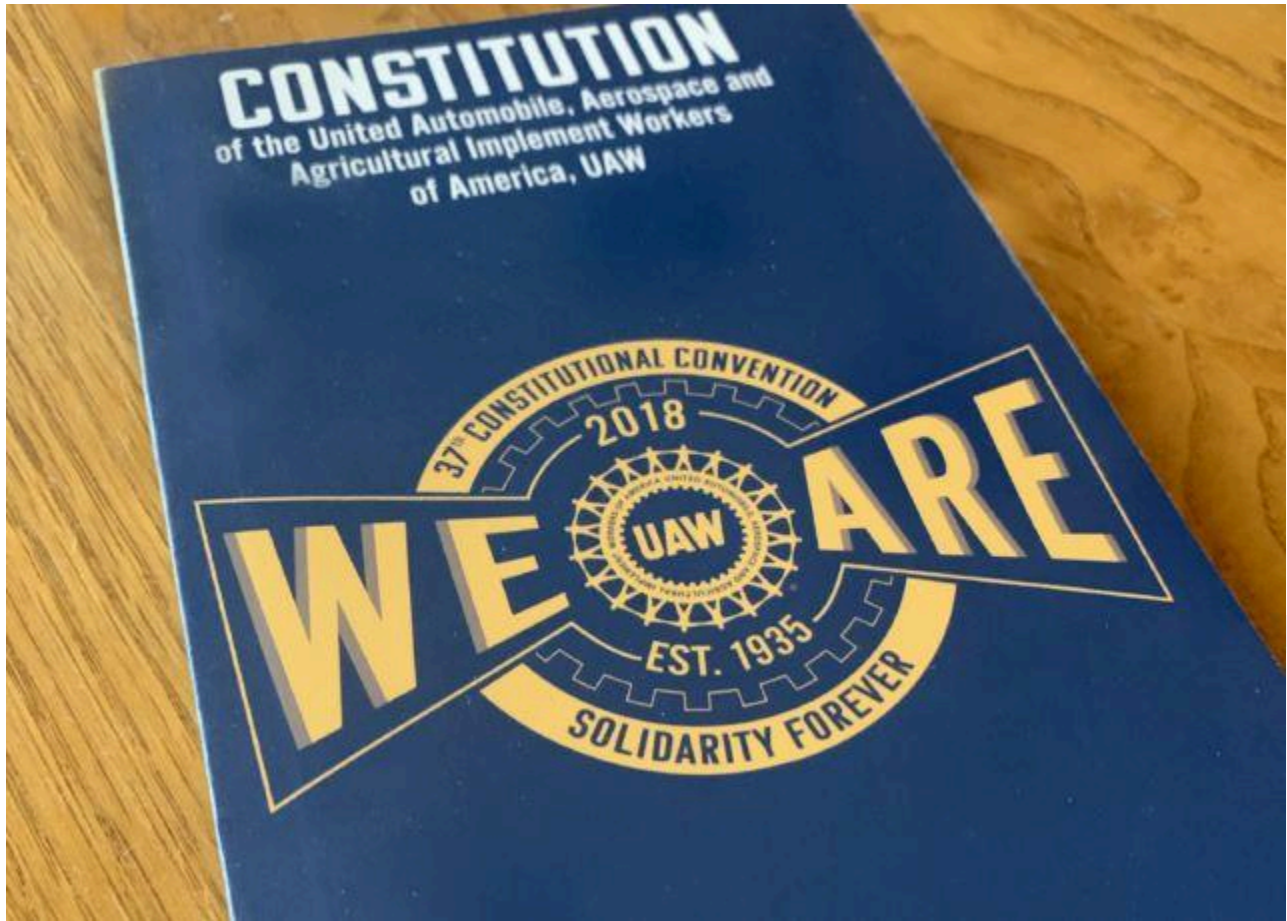


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https://unsplash.com/photos/a-woman-holding-a-sign-that-says-im-sticking-with-my-union-GTPK-Wt1qoY?utm_content=creditShareLink&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=unsplash

Union Basics: The UAW Constitution

The Foundational Document of the United Auto Workers



The Constitution of the United Automobile, Aerospace And Agricultural Implement Workers of America, is the foundational work of the union as a whole. This 217 page document presents a plethora of information surrounding every aspect of the union from the local level all the way to the President of the UAW. Below, will be quoted the greeting from the inside cover of the current edition of the Constitution as adopted by the 38th Constitutional Convention in July of 2022:

⁵ <https://uaw.org/standing-committees/constitution-and-bylaws/>

“Greetings:

The Constitution of the UAW is the highest law of our union. It provides the foundation for the day-to-day operations of our great union, and equally important, it sets forth the rights, guarantees and responsibilities of all UAW members and leaders. It ensures that the unwavering power of democracy is at the forefront of our collective and individual actions.

The UAW’s Constitution enshrines our union’s longstanding values and agreed vision of a society that embraces and implements economic and social justice for all people. As our governing document, the UAW Constitution unites every member in solidarity and strengthens our union at every level.

We are proud of our Constitution and our shared power to adopt and abide by these guiding principles and fundamental values that perpetuate our proud legacy and determine our union’s path and its future.

This document, adopted at the UAW’s 38th Constitutional Convention, reminds us that we are all called to participate meaningfully in making positive decisions affecting our communities, our union, and our nation. I urge you to carefully study our Constitution and apply its principles as a proud member of a great democratic society.

In Solidarity,

UAW International Executive Board”⁶

Over the next several months, we will be taking a deep dive into the Constitution and its founding principles as it relates to every member who wears a union wheel on their work shirt. In this issue, why is the Constitution important and why should you study it?

Do you remember your first union job? That first day, month, year, maybe even longer, did you know what being a member of a union meant? What were you even supposed to do? Over the last four years of getting involved and learning in the rank and file on the floor, I have learned a lot about the history of this union, and some of the great people who have been our brothers and sisters. Until I got my hands on a copy of the Constitution and began reading through the words that are the framework and guiding structure of the union, did I finally begin to understand the goals, values, and needs of the International Union as a whole.

In the Preamble on page three, it reads, “The precepts of democracy require that workers through their union participate meaningfully in making decisions affecting their welfare and that of their communities in which they live.” This is not merely a call telling you to sign a union card and collect a paycheck. This sentence is a call to action to be a steward of the community at every level. To make conscious decisions for the benefit of yourself and your family, the community around you, the state, the country, and the world at large. To be involved in working for the betterment of the time and space we find ourselves everyday while we can.

⁶ Constitution of the International Union: United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, UAW Adopted at the 38th UAW Constitutional Convention, Detroit Michigan, July 2022

The UAW is an organization whose mission is to fight for a better life for all working people. “The structure of work established by management is designed to make of the workers and adjunct to the tool rather than its master. This, coupled with the authoritarian climate of the workplace, robs the worker of their dignity as an adult human being. This belies the democratic heritage we cherish as citizens in a society rooted in democratic values.” The UAW strives to even the scales in the workplace. In a world where management has every advantage over the individual, through means of money, lawyers, and the labor code, when we stand together and help each other, we can fight back and get what we truly deserve for what we sacrifice to the corporate machine.



Throughout the Preamble of the Constitution it talks of family, and defending the democracy that we hold dear for every worker. The labor movement is one that requires participation, passive membership is the status quo, active advocacy leads to progress for your own pocket book, as well as the betterment of society at large. Those who came before us laid the groundwork, the maintenance has been taking a beating. It's time to take back the ground we lost, and earn a better life for ourselves, and those to come after us. Solidarity brothers and sisters.



Editorial Policy

At The International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW) Local 3047 Newsletter, we wish to present a quality publication to build member solidarity, inform, and educate members of the goings-on within the local union, as well as throughout the world. In order to accomplish this goal, the media team and Local Executive Board reserve the right to edit and publish articles and photographs as we see fit in order to maintain journalistic integrity as well as adhere to the IUAW communication standards found in the UAW Constitution.

Content, Submissions, and Approval

Within each issue of the Local 3047 Newsletter, we wish to present you with a variety of information that is relevant to you as a Union member. Standing committee updates and meeting times, as well as meeting times for local meetings and elections will be included throughout the publication. A member spotlight, highlighting a current or former member of the local, will bring a sense of solidarity to the membership as we put faces to the membership. Union Basics as well as updates from the International and Region 8 will be included to keep members informed on the larger happenings within our union. Relevant updates on the labor movement as a whole will also be shared to ensure that the membership is aware of situations that will affect our day to day lives at a national scale.

Should you wish to have an article or photograph included in the newsletter, be sure to adhere to IUAW communication standards for publication. All submissions should be factually accurate, abide by the UAW Constitution and are subject to final fact checking and review standards. The publication reserves the right of all submissions, be it written or photographic, to use any and all artwork or article submissions to be used and distributed at the discretion of the media team. Any and all reproduction of material shall receive prior approval, including but not limited to, individual interviews and photographs of individuals in order to protect member privacy. Any home addresses, phone numbers, or emails are not to be published at any time. The media team and Local Executive Board will have full right to edit, and decide on any final submissions included within each issue.

Frequency and Distribution

The Local 3047 Newsletter will be a monthly, primarily online publication, unless approval from both the Local Executive Board, and Local Membership authorize use of funds to provide a hard copy available within local union facilities.