

United Auto Workers strike back



◆ maggie pollard

UAW workers lined the corner at Exit 28 for 40 days until an agreement was reached on Oct. 25.

◆ camden haga

September 15th-- United Auto workers went on strike at 50 different locations around the United States. Workers at the Corvette plant in Bowling Green were among the other 49 different UAW plants around the nation that went on strike.

This strike is the longest one that the company has experienced since 1970, when workers went on strike for a full 67 days. For many of the workers the strike and its lengthy process is a threat to their financial stability. Although the workers are on strike they are still getting paid \$250 for each week that they are on strike. However, for workers who need to support their family, that is not enough.

When the strike first started these workers were not only letting go of their normal weekly pay but they were also giving up their health care benefits while they were on strike. As long as the strike continued GM took away their health benefits. However, since then they have restored the workers benefits.

Not only is this strike affecting workers but it is also affecting the production being done at the different UAW

plants. Kia Spande, the Corvette assembly plant representative, said "Similar to all other GM sites, production has been impacted. We have been unable to produce Corvettes during the duration of the strike, but we have still been able to perform valuable work (such as maintenance, material, etc.) that will aid in a smoother startup once production resumes." But for the workers, the benefits they are fighting for outweigh these costs.

Workers are fighting for better wages, health care, benefits, profit sharing, and job security at the expense of their benefits. For many, the benefits outweigh the cost. The workers on strike are trying to get General Motors to pay entry level workers \$30 an hour rather than the \$20 dollars an hour they get now.

Not only are they striking for better wages but for better health care as well. The day before the strike (September 14th) GM announced that the workers will pay 15% of their own health care costs. Rather than the 3% they were paying at the time. Ted krumm, the head of the bargaining committee for the union said "We are fighting for the future of the middle class".

General motors offered all workers an \$8,000 bonus if the

workers accepted the deal that they were making. They also offered wage gains and lump-sum payments in the four year contract. However, the health care would stay the same as it is in the current standing contract. The union denied the offer and made a counterproposal because the proposal made by General Motors did not meet the needs and wants of the union. However they provided no detail about their counter offer.

The General Motor workers and the union workers continued to meet at the main table to exchange and negotiate on a deal that satisfies both par-

ties. GM has offered two different proposals but both have been rejected by the union. If the two parties ever mutually agree on a deal the union will vote to end the timely strike and GM will have to put the contract into place.

On October 25th 2019, after a long 40 days of striking the auto workers came to an agreement and the strike ended.

The Bowling Green plant voted no on this particular contract. However, that did not stop other plants from voting yes. The 57% of the overall vote from all the plants around the states voted yes.

The contract that they agreed on "includes an economic package of an \$11,000 per member signing bonus, performance bonuses, two 3% annual raises and two 4% lump sum payments and holding the line on health care costs" according to NPR.

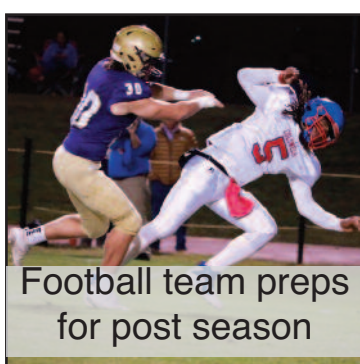
The new changes made in the contract will cost General motors 3 locations. Spande said "GM's goal during the negotiations was to ensure the future of the company is one that works for our employees, dealers, suppliers and the communities where we operate."



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