

# Labor's Language: Glossary of Union Terms

Labor agreements, publications, and even officials often use terms that are almost exclusive to the labor arena. To help stewards feel more comfortable operating in this area, "Labor's Language: A glossary of Labor's Terms" is a regular Steward Edition feature.

**Sixty Day Notice:** According to the Taft-Hartley Act, when either the company or the union wants to reopen or terminate a collective bargaining agreement, 60 day notice of this desire must be given to the other party. Furthermore, under the act, no strike or lock-out may begin during these 60 days.

**Speed Up:** Any system designed to increase worker productivity without an increase in wages.

**Split Shift:** Any form of shift work where there are semi-regular work hours. In some cases, workers may work three different shifts in a work week. A break of several hours is usually scheduled between the reporting times of the workers.

**Strike Force:** A group of volunteer members who have agreed to help picket or leaflet in support of an organizing drive, strike, or other campaign which a local union has initiated.

**Strike Sanction:** In order for a local union to receive strike benefits from the union's national treasury, the strike must be sanctioned by the union's national executive board.

**Struck Work:** A term to define a product which is produced by an employer during the period of a labor dispute with employees. An employee who refuses to handle struck work is engaged in a sympathy work action. Workers who refuse to do the work of workers engaged in a strike may be replaced; however, they generally cannot be discharged. Struck work clauses in some collective bargaining agreements protect the rights of workers not to handle goods of a struck employer. There are limitations on such clauses in Section 8(e) of the National Labor Relations Act.



876 Horace Brown Drive  
Madison Heights, MI 48071

Roger Robinson  
President

Rick Blocker  
Secretary/Treasurer

George Misko  
Recorder

1-800-321-6406  
www.ufcw876.org

# UFCW876 STEWARD EDITION

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## Stewards Enthusiastic About Local's New Training Approach Schedule Accelerated, Ideas Implemented

Based on stewards' extremely positive response to Local 876's new approach to steward training, Local 876 has accelerated the training schedule and is exploring ways to effectively expand the program.

"The stewards who attended the initial training sessions gave the program such high marks and left the sessions so genuinely enthused, that we decided to keep the momentum going by finishing up round one trainings earlier in the year and having all session two trainings completed by mid-year," Roger Robinson, Local 876's president said. "We are also working with Wayne State University to develop a tool, possibly a DVD, we can use with stewards who are unable to attend the group trainings."

The final two session one classes will be held in March or April, with all five session two trainings held by July. Stewards will be mailed an invitation to the training in their area.

Stewards will leave session two with the opportunity to put the one-on-one skills they learned during the day to practice, generating turn-out at a fun union-sponsored event.

"We want stewards to practice and become comfortable in their one-on-

one skills with members during 2009 in preparation for the local's heavy 2010 bargaining schedule," Robinson said. "Over 80 percent of our membership will be involved in contract bargaining next year. During that time, we will have critical messages for stewards to communicate and important meetings stewards will need to convince their co-workers to attend. Much of our success at the bargaining table in 2010 will depend on how well stewards accomplish these tasks."

The training sessions are also a way for stewards to share ideas with one another, as well as the local. One such idea resulted in the local printing business cards for all stewards.

"A steward told the group she found the business cards she printed and distributed at her workplace a very effective way of connecting with members, especially younger workers," Robinson said. "Everyone in the room thought it was a great idea, so we decided to provide business cards for every steward."

Printing is currently being completed on the business cards, a sample of which appears on this page. Once printed, cards are delivered by Union Representatives on their next visit to

**UFCW876**  
**Union Steward**

**Your Name Here**  
**Your Employer/Unit Here**

Your UFCW Local 876 Union Steward has been elected by your coworkers as your workplace union representative. Contact your union steward with questions about your union or contract or to file a grievance.

**For Further Assistance Contact**  
**UFCW Local 876**  
Toll-free: 1.800.321.6406  
Fax: 248.585.0509

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International Union Local 876  
www.ufcw876.org

the unit. The local expects all stewards to have their cards by April.

The questionnaire on page three is also the result of training session conversations with stewards. Several stewards expressed an interest in stepping up their activity as a union steward. By completing and returning the questionnaire, stewards will help the local best serve their individual circumstances and interests.

"We want to get information to stewards and their co-workers in the most effective, efficient, and economic manner possible, and we know that will vary among stewards," Robinson said. "The questionnaire gives stewards the opportunity to tell us what works best for them."

# Yes We Should: UFCW Michigan Leaders Speak Out on Loans to Big 3

During the December 2008 controversy surrounding a government loan to Detroit's automakers, Local 876 President Roger Robinson and Local 951 President Marv Russow issued a joint commentary on their united support for this action.

The following is their statement as printed in the December 11 Detroit News.

We endorse government loans for the Detroit 3 automakers for many reasons. First and foremost, we support the UAW workers at GM, Ford and Chrysler. Unlike some in the media and the Congress, we are well aware that their paychecks are critical to the economy of Michigan. Most of the members we represent in the grocery and retail business would be directly affected by the loss of good jobs.

It is stunning to us that so many fail to see the ripple effect that the collapse of the Detroit 3 would have on jobs and the economy. The transformational steps taken already by the Detroit 3 and the UAW to adapt to new realities in the transportation industry have brought year after year of significant job and income loss.

How do we know that? Many of our members come from UAW families. We see it as well in the reduced spending and the reduced traffic in the retail and grocery stores where most of our members work.

Because we are union leaders we also stand for fairness. We have been appalled at the hypocrisy. Many of the Detroit 3's loudest critics come from states that have spent hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to subsidize the foreign-based competitors of GM, Ford and Chrysler. Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Ala., is a good example. Alabama has provided massive subsidies to Mercedes

Benz and Hyundai to locate assembly plants there. Why? It was assumed that creating good-paying jobs would produce a robust economy. And guess what -- that is exactly what happened.

So why is it so hard to understand that eliminating good-paying jobs will have a crippling effect on the economy? Why won't any member of the media even ask Shelby about his potential conflict of interest? Perhaps he sees putting GM, Ford and Chrysler out of business as a way to weaken unions. No one has asked him about that either.

The foreign-based competitors of the Detroit 3 have younger workers and consequently dramatically lower costs for health care and retirement. That's just one element of many powerful forces working to drive down wages and living standards for all U.S. working families.

The decades-long downward pressure on wages is the underlying cause of the economic crisis. If workers were paid the true value of the productivity improvements made in recent times, "frozen" credit markets would have lit-

tle or no impact on consumer spending.

But because the value of those productivity gains have gone disproportionately to the wealthy, workers have become dependent on credit, even for daily life expenses. The wage stagnation chickens have now come home to roost.

Ironically it is that very same "to-hell-with-the-workers" mind-set that explains why trillion dollar bailouts for Wall Street firms come with no questions asked about how much their workers make, how they will guarantee that their business will succeed, whether their executives travel by corporate jet or what "sacrifices" they will make.

So, yes government loans for the Detroit 3 would save many, many jobs. But maybe, just maybe, the loans would also be a baby step toward restoring some balance to both the theory and the practice of what it takes to have a healthy consumer-driven economy. Maybe, just maybe, we could begin to shift back to a country where workers can truly afford the goods and services that we and other workers produce.

# Local 876 Steward 2009 Questionnaire

Local 876 wants to provide you with information as effectively, efficiently and economically as possible. Your answers to the following questions will help us determine the type, quantity and format of information to send you in the future, in addition to regular steward mailings. After completing your questionnaire, please return it in the accompanying postage paid envelope by February 1, 2009.

Please print clearly.

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Unit Number \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_@\_\_\_\_\_

Please check all that apply.

Mail me:



- Copies of the bi-monthly Local 876 *Bulletin* to distribute to my co-workers.
- Postings to put up on the union bulletin board at my workplace.
- Handbills to distribute to my co-workers.

Send me electronic copies of:

- The bi-monthly Local 876 *Bulletin* that I will print at home and distribute to my co-workers.
- Postings that I will print at home and put up on the union bulletin board at my workplace.
- Handbills that I will print at home and distribute to my co-workers.
- I would be willing to sell tickets to Local 876 events scheduled in my area to my co-workers.
- I would like to receive electronic copies of Local 876 publications (in addition to those sent to my home)

Local 876 regularly sends electronic updates to members on a variety of topics. Please put a check mark next to the updates you would like to receive via email.

- Local 876 Member Info Network
- Steward Updates
- Political and Legislative Update
- Detroit Grocery Store Initiative
- UFCW Local 876 Young Workers

 **Help Spread the Word!** 

**2009 UFCW Local 876  
Scholarship Applications Available**

Stewards should make sure every member is familiar with the Local 876 Scholarship Program which annually awards five \$2,000 scholarships to eligible members and their dependent children accepted or attending an accredited college, university (under-graduate or graduate), community college, or recognized trade school on a full-time or part-time basis.

“Not only is the scholarship program a great example of how Local 876 works for our members, the awards make a real difference in the recipients’ lives,” Roger Robinson, Local 876’s president, said. “Stewards need to do all they can to promote the program, especially among members who are going to school.”

Flyers and posters detailing the scholarship program, along with 2009 scholarship applications can be requested from the union office at 1-800-321-6406.