

# HORIZONS

NEW

## Message from Nate Gooden: 2003 contract a winner for retirees

The battle cry is over.

A long-fought struggle it was, but nothing worth fighting for is going to be easy. And as implement the new 2003 National Agreement, our membership and retirees can be assured that the national bargaining committee worked extremely hard to preserve some of our hard-won benefits.

Our president, Ron Gettelfinger, was adamant that healthcare would remain at the forefront of the union's agenda, and under the new agreement, we have prevailed.

"We're not going to go backwards in health care," Ron said before negotiations began. Delivering on health care has been a cornerstone not only of the bargaining strategy for our 58,000 retirees at DaimlerChrysler, but also of the UAW's national political agenda.

One of the biggest health care issues has been the rising cost of prescription drugs. And even though the company wanted to push up co-payments, your negotiating team defeated such efforts. Here are some of the retiree benefits contained in the new four-year agreement.

- Beginning January 2004, co-payments for active and future retirees for retail drugs will be

\$5 (generic prescriptions) and \$10 (brand-name prescriptions) for the Standard Plan, PPO and HMO health plans.

- There will be a mandatory mail order for certain "maintenance" drugs for chronic conditions like hypertension, diabetes and high cholesterol. This is extremely cost-effective because there is one co-payment for a 90-day supply of drugs.



- There will be a basic benefit increase of \$4.20 per month per year. Retirees and surviving spouses will also receive four lump-sum payments in each year, starting with a payment of \$800 in December 2003. Surviving spouses will receive \$520.

• Retirees are eligible to receive two vehicle vouchers worth \$1,000 toward the purchase of a Chrysler vehicle during the term of the proposed agreement, one in the first year and one in the third year.

- Tuition Assistance Program has also increased for retirees from \$1,250 to \$1,500 per calendar year.

Retirees, traditionally are the backbone of this union and continue to be a significant part of what makes this union move. When we go to the table to fight for the rights of our members, you best believe that the hard work and effort of our retirees is at the top of the agenda.

## ETCHED IN STONE: New retiree center honors Gooden

It is no secret that retirees are important to the UAW.

And the recently constructed Nate Gooden Community and Retiree Center is just one example of solidifying that tie.

The center was added to the UAW Region 1 complex in Warren, Mich., and at the prompting of Region 1 leadership, bears the name of one of its own.

"Nate's involvement for the past 40 years has not just been about collective bargaining, but also about community involvement," said Ken



Terry, director of Region 1. "I don't know anyone who gives back and cares for the community like Nate."

Warren government officials also recognize how committed Gooden has been to the city.

"We are honored to have the Nate Gooden facility in Warren," said City Councilman Cecil St. Pierre, who presented Gooden with a

plaque at a dedication ceremony, which unveiled the center in August.

# Working Woman

At 67, Avanita Gibson is full of life.

A UAW Local 140 retiree from Chrysler's former Amplex plant, she hasn't lost her charm or her stamina. And her volunteer work at this year's UAW Retired Workers booth at the Michigan State Fair is just one example of how active she really is.

"I enjoy my work," Gibson says with a warm smile. "But mostly, I like being involved in the UAW."

Gibson's definition of retirement is "helping other people." Her charming smile spoke volumes to the passersby at the booth, and from the joyous look on her face, she is living up to the task.

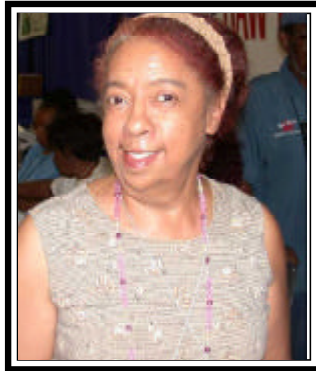
Gibson was one of nearly a dozen UAW retirees who volunteered to staff the Retired Workers booth at the fair that ended September 1. The camaraderie of fellowship in the group of retirees is the same type of solidarity that characterizes the UAW.

Having frequented the fair as a volunteer since 1988, Gibson feels extremely proud of her contribution to her fellow retirees. And even still, her annual work at the fair is just a fraction of her volunteer efforts.

After having stuffed thousands of souvenir bags

everyday at the fair, Gibson puts in work twice a week for UAW Local 140's retiree chapter. She's a consumer activist, offering mounds of information to seniors in need of assistance.

"I help seniors with health care problems, benefits and sometimes guide them to legal services," she says. "I love what I do. It gets me out the house and helps me forget the aches and pains."



Gibson's volunteer work comes from her sincere dedication to the union.

"The retirees are extremely important to the union," she says. "They worked long and hard. A lot of us went on strike and endured a lot in order to have the benefits we have today."

Gibson began working at Chrysler's Amplex plant in 1967. She worked in the sandblast department in the Detroit facility until her retirement in 1979.

"I've always been active in the union," says Gibson. "And even though I never was a union officer, I always felt like one."

Her volunteer efforts for causes significant to the union are her way of returning a portion of what the union has done for her.

"I want others to know that we're a proud organization." And with that, Gibson shoots another warm smile at the

## ETCHED IN STONE

Continued from page 1

Gooden was elected Region 1 director in 1998 before taking his current post as vice president and director of the UAW's DaimlerChrysler Department in 1999. He was re-elected at the union's 33<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Convention in June 2002.

The 10,000 square-foot Nate Gooden pavilion can seat as many as 1,200 people and is available for both UAW and the Warren community's use. It will house political events, concerts, banquets and other activities including those of retirees. A large open

grass area for visitor's enjoyment surrounds the community center's spacious interior.

"It's truly a great honor," Gooden said at the dedication ceremony. "Never in my lifetime would I have thought that a building would bear my name. We in the UAW are a very caring organization, and this just goes to show how easily what we do in the UAW extends itself to the community."

And another way in which the UAW has extended itself to its retirees.

# Sign of the Times

## Labor Legacy leaves its mark

“This monument is a fitting tribute to the working men and women who built this city,” says Oscar Paskal, a UAW-DaimlerChrysler retiree. “Here you can find labor’s history and accomplishments as well as its vision for the future.”

That’s how Paskal describes the Michigan Labor Legacy Landmark, which was dedicated in August as a testament to the importance of working men and women in the city of Detroit and elsewhere.

And it all came about as the result of a UAW retiree’s suggestion.

Located in downtown Detroit’s Hart Plaza, the 63-foot high arc is connected at its crest by a bright light that represents the energy of workers. Fourteen granite boulders that give a hint of the labor movement’s history accent the monument. Quotations from leaders instrumental in labor’s history surround the landmark, such as Martin Luther King Jr., Eugene Debs, Frederick Douglass, Eleanor Roosevelt and the UAW’s Walter Reuther.

Hundreds of supporters, labor activists and officials came out for the dedication that began with a trumpet composition performed by members of the Detroit Federation of Musicians. It ended with several speakers whose support of the \$1.5 million project was evident in their words.

“Labor built this city,” said Donald Boggs, Metro-Detroit AFL-CIO president. “Labor built this nation.”

While many organizations and individuals contributed to the construction of the steel monument, Vice President Gerald Bantom, director of the UAW’s Ford Department, gave special recognition to the UAW-DaimlerChrysler National Training Center and other joint programs for their continuous support of labor unions.

Prompted by the suggestion of UAW retiree Mike Kerwin, the landmark became an idea for a public art project during the commemoration of Detroit’s 300<sup>th</sup> birthday.



“We looked around the city and saw anchor monuments, generals and mainly famous people, and there was nothing that honored ordinary people,” said Kerwin. “We wanted to do something that touched on the working men and women of Detroit.”

Kerwin is a retired member of amalgamated West Side Local 174, the home local of UAW-Chrysler’s first president, Walter Reuther.

Construction of the landmark began in 2000 and will be completed this Fall.

## Rapping about Retirement

“Learn to live within your means. Give respect to the idea that you aren’t getting a paycheck every week and budget yourself accordingly. Most importantly, pay close attention to health and take advantage of the things that are offered by the UAW negotiated contracts. We are quite fortunate to have comprehensive coverage. Take advantage of it.

**--Bill English, Retiree Chapter Chair, UAW Local 7**

“Don’t retire until you get ready. And after retirement, take advantage of the training centers and keep your education up. These new computers are coming out and we’re at an age where this is all new to us. To train an old guy like me can sometimes be hard. Whatever you do, don’t go home and sit down.”

**--Larry Scott, Retiree Chapter Chair, UAW Local 685**

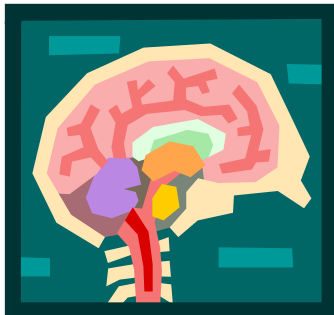
“The best part about retirement is not getting up in the morning. Chrysler’s benefits are out of this world and being assured a good pension is not easy to come by.”

**--Herbert Bowie, UAW Local 1268**

# Forget What You Heard

You hear it all the time. *I must be getting old. I can't remember where I left my...* The truth of the matter is, memory loss is not an inevitable condition of old age. In fact, many seniors remain sharp, alert and cognizant well into their years.

But when does good old forgetfulness turn into a worrisome and progressive condition? That question has boggled the minds of many physicians as well as others who care for older Americans.



At the first sign of memory loss, caregivers and seniors often jump to the scary conclusion that Alzheimer's is looming in the balance. However, age-associated forgetfulness is a decline in short-term memory; it doesn't progress to other mental impairments as Alzheimer's disease does.

Some causes of memory loss are depression, alcohol abuse, medications (or a combination of the two), poor nutrition, dehydration, thyroid problems and sleeplessness, to name a few.

The key is that there are also some active solutions to curbing mild or moderate memory loss:

- **Challenge your mind.** Stimulating the brain sharpens thinking and keeps the circuits clicking. It's the neural equivalent of a gym workout. Seniors should read, write, volunteer and tackle other memory exercises to keep the mind working. Just like inactive muscles and bones, the mind and memory will degenerate if not put to good use.

- **Engage in walking or other moderate exercise.** Walking and exercise wakes up a sleepy brain and can fend off depression, anxiety and other emotional disorders that affect memory.

- **Write down reminders.** This helps in two ways: psychologically it reinforces the thought and provides a reminder to fall back on.

- **Connecting people or objects with already familiar words can help strengthen memory.** It's often helpful to create the mental connection between people and things to make it easier to remember.

Overall, memory loss in older Americans doesn't have to suggest a serious condition. The strategies above can help to alleviate some of the frustration associated with memory loss. Talk to your doctor if you have concerns about your memory, and make sure they are not the sign of a bigger health issue.

If you have story ideas or suggestions on *New Horizons*, contact **Tanisha Perez** at **313.567.3300** or e-mail [tdavis@ucntc.org](mailto:tdavis@ucntc.org).

Please visit our new Web site at [www.uawdcx.com](http://www.uawdcx.com)

## *New Horizons*

is published quarterly under auspices of the UAW-DaimlerChrysler Joint Activities Board for UAW-



UAW-DaimlerChrysler  
National Training Center

### **Nate Gooden**

Vice President, Director  
DaimlerChrysler Dept.  
UAW  
Co-Chairman

### **John Franciosi**

Senior Vice President  
Employee Relations