



RETIREE VOICE IS NOW ONLINE!

Welcome to the first official online version of *Retiree Voice*!

We're excited to bring this publication online to reach a wider audience and make it easier for UFCW retirees to stay informed about union news — including our recent organizing and bargaining victories.

UFCW retirees have always played a vital role in our union, and your voices are more important than ever as we confront an increasingly anti-union political and business climate. As we continue fighting for workers' rights and protecting the right to organize and bargain collectively, staying connected and supporting one another is essential.

In this issue, you'll find information about some of our first-ever organizing and bargaining wins since the last issue of *Retiree Voice*, as well as a spotlight on one of the UFCW's retirees. The Voluntary Assignment of Pension Benefits form for the UFCW International Active Ballot Club is available [here](#).

Thank you for all that you do to help make our union stronger and more united. I hope you and your families have a happy and healthy holiday season.

Sincerely,



Milton Jones,
President, UFCW International

CHAIR'S CHATTER BY JIM LOWTHERS



“We can’t stand by as this administration continues to stoke division, weaken key institutions, and dismantle the ability of working people to stand together for their rights under the law—including the right to join a union.”

Just a few months into the Trump administration, we've witnessed political and economic instability that has had real and devastating consequences—especially for working people.

This administration has fired and gutted union protections for thousands of federal workers, and removed key officials at regulatory agencies like the National Labor Relations Board and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. This administration also fired the head of the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, and gutted the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health—a key workplace safety agency.

And now, the administration's budget bill is slashing critical programs like food assistance and Medicaid—programs that are not only designed to provide critical resources to those that need it, but that support jobs for our own members in grocery stores, food processing plants, and health care facilities across the U.S.

While these vital programs are being cut, the administration's budget bill hands tax breaks to the wealthy few and funnels billions of dollars into border security and immigration enforcement, expanding detention and deportation operations. Meanwhile, the administration's tariffs have led to higher prices on groceries and imported goods—costs that retirees and working families feel every day.

We can't stand by as this administration continues to stoke division, weaken key institutions, and dismantle the ability of working people to stand together for their rights under the law—including the right to join a union.

I encourage you to keep educating friends, family members and neighbors about the power and protections that come with a union contract. Stay in close contact with your UFCW local unions and begin discussions about the importance of electing worker-friendly candidates in the upcoming 2026 midterm elections.

To stay connected with other UFCW retirees, you're welcome to join the Facebook group for UFCW retired staff [here](#).

Together, we will continue to defend the rights of all working people and ensure that our union remains strong and united. Thank you for all that you do to make our union stronger every day.

BUILDING WORKER POWER



Since the last issue of *Retiree Voice*, our union has continued to celebrate groundbreaking organizing wins and first union contracts.

This August, over 80 workers at Festival Foods in Madison, Wis., voted to join UFCW Local 1473, marking the first time Festival Foods workers have unionized at the company.

Madison Festival Foods workers filed for a union election with the National Labor Relations Board in July after being denied voluntary recognition by the company. They now join thousands of other grocery workers represented by UFCW Local 1473, and are looking forward to negotiating a first union contract that secures better pay, more reliable scheduling, health insurance for part-time workers, and other benefits.

“My co-workers and I got stronger and stronger throughout our push to organize and create this union,” said Steven Temple, a leader of the organizing committee who works in the deli department at Festival Foods. “We recognized the company’s propaganda for what it was and stayed together and united. We’re thrilled to be joining our union brothers and sisters at UFCW Local 1473.”

“We’re ready to bargain our first contract and secure better store security, fair attendance policies, stable scheduling, benefits for our part-time co-workers, and pay that keeps up with the cost of living,” Temple added. “I look forward to meeting Festival Foods at the bargaining table.”

“I was a union member at my last job for 33 years,” said Gloria Dickman, who works in guest services at Festival Foods and is a member of the organizing committee. “My whole family was, and is, union – my parents and my husband. My younger co-workers were determined to join a union, and they made this happen. I’m union proud and proud of them for achieving this victory for all of us!”

“Workers should never be afraid to push for more,” said May Bishoff, who works in the liquor department at Festival Foods. “When you stick together, you actually have the power to achieve something.”

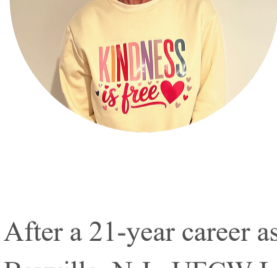
Members of UFCW Local 1625 who work at the H&M store in Melbourne, Fla., ratified their first union contract in June.

The 14 workers, who are employed as sales associates and visual associates, made history when they joined UFCW Local 1625 in May of 2024, marking the first time H&M workers have unionized in the state of Florida.

The three-year contract includes annual wage increases; a weekly guarantee of hours for part- and full-time employees; and bereavement leave that expands the definition of immediate family members. The contract also includes job posting and emergency closing language, and a 30-day notice before any dress code changes are made.

“We look forward to representing the H&M workers,” said UFCW Local 1625 President Ed Chambers. “We are hopeful that since our foot is in the door, we’ll be able to organize more retail workers in the future.”

UFCW RETIREE SPOTLIGHT



Local 152 Member Robyn Edler

“I loved my job and union wages were key to helping me retire.”

After a 21-year career as the second in charge of the overnight crew at the Saker ShopRite store in Bayville, N.J., UFCW Local 152 member Robyn Edler made the decision to retire in September.

Reflecting on her years of service, she credited her union membership for helping make retirement possible.

“I loved my job and union wages were key to helping me retire,” she said. “I was able to get my pension early at the age of 64 and still have my union health care benefits until I turn 65.”

She encourages younger generations of workers to get involved in organizing and recognize the power of a unionized workplace.

“I liked having a union to back me up when I needed it at work,” she said. “My union reps were always helpful, and they will fight for you.”

Congratulations, Robyn Edler, on your well-earned retirement — and thank you for your years of service at Saker ShopRite and for helping to make our union better and stronger!

UFCW International Union Pension Plan for Employees Authorization

VOLUNTARY ASSIGNMENT OF PENSION BENEFITS

All retired UFCW members are eligible to join the Active Ballot Club (ABC), the UFCW's political action committee through the voluntary assignment of pension benefits. The ABC helps mobilize UFCW members to advocate for the issues that make their lives better. From getting union members out to vote, to lobbying for worker-friendly legislation to supporting elected leaders who will represent the interests of working people—every dollar helps to ensure that the laws passed at all levels of government help hard-working families enjoy more economic stability.

The Voluntary Assignment of Pension Benefits form for the UFCW International Active Ballot Club is available at the link below.

[Contribute Here](#)