

Election results bring determination to stay Union Proud, Union Strong

By **DAVID COOK**
President



COOK

Last week's election was supremely disappointing for the hard-working men and women of Missouri's Labor Unions. While the will of our membership was clearly opposed to it, Missourians chose to elect more candidates – including our next Governor – who stand firmly in favor of so called "right-to-work" laws that gut organizations like ours and weaken a worker's power on the job.

Many partners of Local 655 worked tirelessly for candidates that support middle class families, and for their work I am extremely grateful. They put in the time and effort that we need to see even more of if we wish to guard against the attacks of corporate interests on working people.

The results of Missouri's election are indicative of a wave we saw all across the country. What happened here was not unique. Indeed, Missouri did what many states in this nation did, and there is simply no standing against such a formative shift in the public desire.

We now have strong reason to believe that lawmakers in Jefferson City will attempt to make "right-to-work" the law of the land. This is unfortunate because any elected official who is serious about helping middle class families and creating good jobs ought to see the clear and demonstrated value of strong Unions in Missouri.

We will continue to communicate our message that Unions create better jobs and communities for all, and we will continue to bring this message to elected officials to educate them on the value of remaining a state that supports its Union workers.

But we also must look to the future and prepare for the possibility that we will become a "right-to-work" state.

Local 655 cannot pretend that this transition will not be hard. We cannot pretend that the road ahead will be easy or that our journey forward will be comfortable. But I am committed to seeing us through this new reality in a way that minimizes the damage of these wrong-headed policies and positions us to be able to fight for every single worker in the future.

And while looking to the road ahead brings many at Local 655 frustration and sadness, we all remember that the real losers on November 8 are not Union leaders like myself, or my staff. Missouri workers lost last week, and this new world will ultimately present even more challenges for men and women looking simply to

work at a job with good wages, good benefits and respect and dignity on the job. As we chart a new course, we will always seek the course that helps our partners achieve their goals.

On Wednesday night, less than 24 hours after the election, I happened to step into a UFCW Local 655 grocery store to pick up a few last-minute items. Within a few minutes, I found myself talking with five of our hard-working partners about the prospect of "right-to-work" coming to Missouri. I'm happy to report that all of these partners had essentially the same question: What do we do now, and what can I do to keep my union strong?

I will tell all of you what I told them. If "right-to-work" comes to Missouri, our partners must become our most valuable advocates for the benefits of being in a Union.

Those of you that care deeply about this organization that works every day for you must talk about why you are proud to be in a Union with your co-workers. You must engage newer employees, particularly our young partners, in conversations about why you support and defend the organization that supports and defends you.

We must all resolve to be outspoken about the value Local 655 can bring to all workers. We must all see ourselves as active partners in an organization determined to shape our own future and not have it shaped for us.

In short, any Local 655 member who wants to know what they can do during this time has a simple responsibility: speak up. Your co-workers are hearing you. And if what they are hearing is a positive message about an organization dedicated to protecting their rights, securing their benefits and fighting for better wages, those co-workers will commit to this Union just like you have.

Despite the difficult election results, I urge the men and women of Labor not to lose hope. Now, more than ever, it will be essential to work even harder.

We must show politicians and greedy corporate interests that we do not stay on the mat when we are knocked down. No measure of laws attempting to weaken the power of the working man will succeed in keeping us from marching toward a better future for ourselves and our families.

We are the many. We are the collective voice of the worker, and together we remain strong. Our unity, our mission, our fundamental commitment to a better life for hard-working families cannot and will not be shaken. As brothers and sisters in Labor, we remain a family steadfastly fighting for one another.

We remain Union Proud, and Union Strong.

**AN EXCLUSIVE
TWICE MONTHLY
REPORT FOR**

**UFCW 655
MEMBERS &
THEIR FAMILIES**

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New TV commercials aimed at Walmart set to air



PROUD UNION 'SALESMAN' encouraging shoppers to buy groceries only at union supermarkets is Dierbergs' DeShon Thomas.

UFCW Local 655, in partnership with Local 88, is set to begin airing a new TV commercial in the St. Louis market hoping to drive shoppers away from Walmart and toward Union grocers.

The commercial, part of a series of commercials filmed earlier this year, is part of a larger campaign on the part of Local 655/88 that hopes to positively brand the two local unions to the public and remind shoppers about the importance of supporting local Union labor.

The ad will take aim squarely at Stan Kroenke, the owner of the former St. Louis Rams and his connection to Walmart.

Kroenke's long relationship with Walmart played a significant part in helping to build his fortune. Not only did Kroenke's development company build Walmarts across St. Louis and around the country, but Kroenke himself married into Walmart's Walton family. Kroenke achieved infamy last year as he began to publicly push for moving the Rams to Los Angeles. His campaign also featured several comments that were deeply critical of St. Louis, which he said was headed toward economic catastrophe.

"This NFL Sunday, we can all send Stan and Walmart a message," one UFCW Local 655 member says in the commercial. "Shop local, not Walmart."

The commercial will remind shoppers of Kroenke's Walmart connection before urging them to take their dollars to Schnucks, Shop 'n Save, or Dierbergs, the three largest employers for Local 655.

"This ad is a piece of a larger campaign that we hope will educate the public on the



TV PRODUCTION is a challenge but Shop 'n Save's Rosalind Cunningham is up to it.

good things Unions do every day to secure better wages and benefits for their partners," said UFCW Local 655 President David Cook.

"If the public understands that their dollars can either go to padding a billionaire's pocket, or helping a mother or father support their family, I trust them to choose the family every time."

The ad is set to air this week on local and cable programming. Cook said that he believed many football fans will be moved by a message that targets Kroenke after his deeply unpopular comments about the city and his even more unpopular decision to move our football team.

"We didn't just lose a football team, we lost good jobs," the commercial emphasizes.

Shop Union for the holidays

Buy these and other Union-made products.
Here are a few suggestions.

TURKEY AND HAM

- Miller Ham Company
- Double G Brand Hams
- Boar's Head
- Butterball
- Eckrich Deli
- Foster Farms
- House of Raeford Farms
- Klement's
- Saag's
- Sahlen's
- Thumann's

POTATOES

- Ore Ida
- Betty Crocker
- McCain

CRANBERRY SAUCE

- Ocean Spray

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

- Anheuser-Busch
- Arbor Mist
- Budweiser
- Chateau Ste. Michelle
- Gallo of Sonoma
- Miller
- Jim Beam



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