

Go into new year with union pride

By ROME ALOISE

As another year comes to a close, we need to evaluate what worked, what didn't work and what we need to improve in order to provide our members the best representation possible.

The good news

The good news is that we were able to settle all of our contract negotiations for hundreds of workers without one day of work lost due to a strike or lockout. Local 853 contracts, for the most part, are still the best in the nation in the industries that we represent.

We organized hundreds of new members and negotiated first contracts for them. Also, Local 921, a great union with a great history, merged into Local 853 this year, bringing the newspaper drivers from the *San Francisco Chronicle* into our Local. We welcome these new members with enthusiasm.

We added hundreds of new members to the International Union's political action fund, DRIVE, and also registered more new voters among our members than all but one other Local in the state!

Our union is strong because we keep it strong, because our members are informed and involved, and because we care about each other. Also, we continue to push to the

edge, developing new programs like the immigrant assistance project described in this issue of *Connections*, and building on our successes, like our membership appreciation day program. If we become complacent, that's the beginning of the end. In the coming year, let's keep pushing.

Keep our union strong

Here's how each member of Local 853 can keep our union strong, and keep those good contracts coming in the next year:

- Make sure that you speak positively about your union to outsiders. We can complain among ourselves, but speak positively to those who don't have the advantages of union representation.
- Greet a new worker in your place of employment positively on their first day. Make them feel comfortable, answer their questions about the job and about the union.
- Talk to a non-union worker about the advantages of the union.
- Come to at least one regular monthly union meeting in the coming year.
- Register to vote, if you haven't already.

It is not very hard to do these things. If all 6,000 of our members took an active part in our local union, you'd be amazed at how much we could accomplish.

The bad news, of course, has to do with many things that are out of our control. After 8-10 years of good times, the economy is in trouble. The cost of health care is skyrocketing.

And last month, the nation's voters decided to back President Bush because of the threat of war. They paid little attention to the sagging economy or to the Republican's anti-worker sentiments and their total disregard for what is happening to workers who are losing their jobs by the thousands.

The Republicans now control the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives. So you can forget about any assistance on the issues that affect workers the most—health care, safety, and job security—at least for the next two years.

We did a great job in California, though, electing a pro-union governor and state office holders, and with a strong pro-labor majority in the State Legislature. That means that the gains we made in improving the unemployment insurance and workers compensation benefits will be secure. It means that the prevailing wage in the construction industry will be sustained.

A final note for the holidays

The spirit and solidarity of Local 853 was perhaps best exemplified when our members helped our office manager Janine Vanier receive a national award from the Multiple Sclerosis Society for being the largest individual fundraiser in the country! We have made fund-raising for research to cure this disease a goal for our Local. This was a great project for our union, and it shows what we can accomplish for our community. Thanks to all of you who made contributions of time and money for this cause.

Best wishes for a happy and safe holiday season. Spend time with your families. Let us all give thanks for the things we have, and particularly for our ability in this great country to belong to a union that helps win a decent standard of living for our families and ourselves.



New center to help immigrant workers



In an effort to assist non-English speaking workers, Local 853 has joined with Locals 70 and 78, Joint Council 7 and the International Union to establish a Workers' Center. Located at Local 78's Hayward offices, the Center will help undocumented workers to complete the paperwork to obtain their citizenship, teach them about their rights—as workers and citizens—and teach English as a Second Language (ESL) to help them get ahead in this country.

"Of course, a project like this is a two-way street," says Local 853 Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise. "Most undocumented workers face difficult conditions in non-union shops. We need to organize these shops—both to improve wages and working conditions, but also to ensure that they don't unfairly compete with our good union employers. By supporting these workers now, hopefully they will help us in organizing drives down the line."

On October 26, the Workers' Center held its first Citizenship Day event. Event turnout was high—more than 40 people showed up for the citizenship orientation, followed by one-on-one counseling with immigration specialists.

For more information about the Workers' Center, call 510-889-6030.



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Local 853 — organizing and building a stronger union



*Happy Holidays and best wishes
for a prosperous new year*

*From the
officers and staff of
Teamsters Local 853*

• Rome Aloise • John Becker • Antonio Christian •
• Jeff Belunza • Jennifer Casqueiro • Jesse Casqueiro • Sonia De La Cruz • Kim Drinkward •
• Pete Easton • Mike Furtado • Dan Harrington • Stu Helfer • Janice Johnson •
• Mike Killean • Eveone Miller • Julie Molina • Bo Morgan • Lydia Pinedo • Phil Puett •
• Bob Strelo • Phil Tarantino • Janine Vanier •



CONNECTIONS

In a low turnout election, Labor made the difference

Union members won the election for Davis

The night of November 5 was more of a nail-biter for Gray Davis' re-election team than anyone really expected. While non-union voters preferred Bill Simon by a vote of 45% to 44%, union members supported Davis by a 57% to 32% margin, putting him over the top.

1.8 million union members came to the polls, representing 28% of all voters in the state. In the end, Davis won by a margin of 47.5% to 42.4%—he could not have done it without Labor!

Unions help win other seats

California's unions helped other candidates win close races and drove a few more to resounding victory.

Cruz Bustamante, Bill Lockyer, Phil Angelides and Jack O'Connell won by solid margins, while Kevin Shelley and John Garamendi won by smaller leads. Steve Westly, who led by a fraction of a point, announced that victory would have been impossible without Labor's help in the form of phone calls and mail.

An aggressive get-out-the-vote effort in the 18th Congressional District put Dennis Cardoza over the top—boosting the pro-labor Democratic majority lead among California's Congressional delegation from 32-21 to 33-20.

Labor's get-out-the-vote effort was second to none

Most Democrats across the country lacked a cohesive message and vision for voters, but in California union victories provided a more defined set of issues to campaign on—our issues.

Teamsters Local 853 did our part to influence the results. Joint Council 7 challenged every local to register 10% more members. Not only did we exceed that goal

by registering 912 new voters (over 15%), but we registered more new voters than any other local in the Joint Council.

Without a coordinated union effort, many of the candidates who won would have followed the national trend and lost in California.

Now that we won...

We have little time to savor these victories: the state of the national economy and the antipathy of the Bush Administration will severely impact California workers.

The time is now to remind the winning candidates that it was Labor who registered the voters, spent the money and walked the precincts to get them elected.

The time is now to hold our "pro-labor" friends accountable, and ensure they keep the promises they made to us.

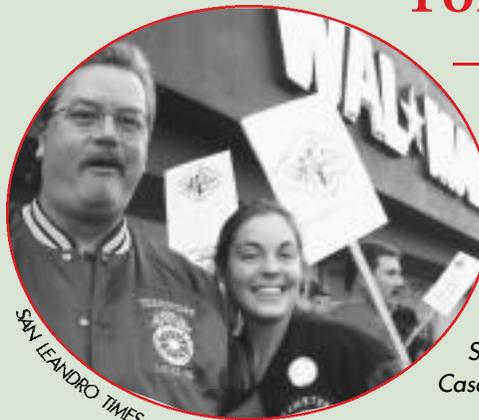
The time is now to address the crisis in health care before it breaks the bank of our trust funds. Future state budgets require balance to protect programs while increasing revenues by restoring fair taxes paid in the top tax brackets by the wealthiest Californians.

These are the issues workers care about, and they are the issues we'll be pushing in the year ahead.

Labor clearly made the difference for this election! Now Labor must ensure that our money and time was well spent.

Picketing Wal-Mart

for the holidays



More than 200 trade unionists came to Wal-Mart's San Leandro center on November 21 as part of the National Justice at Wal-Mart campaign. Local 853 brought its Mobile Command Center and lots of members.

Shown here are Business Agent Bob Strelo and office worker Jennifer Casqueiro at the picket.

Don't shop at Wal-Mart!

This company is anti-worker, anti-consumer and anti-community. The few cents you *may* save at Wal-Mart comes directly out of Wal-Mart workers' families. The average wage is \$7.50 per hour, most employees cannot afford the health insurance co-pays and the company does not allow its employees the right to a union election.

Support the *Justice at Wal-Mart* campaign. Shop elsewhere this holiday season.

Announcements

Extra Check for pensioners

Despite the challenges of a weakened economy and capital markets which have impacted negatively on the Western Conference Pension Trust's investments over the past two years, the Trustees of the Fund have been able to issue an Extra check to pre-1985 retirees. The checks will be \$600 for retirees, and \$500 for surviving spouses.

The ability to issue this extra check is due to the Trust's conservative, safe and diverse investments that are structured to ride through tough market conditions like those we have faced in the last two years. This means that there is no risk to the monthly benefit checks that thousands of retired Teamsters receive.

Supplemental Income Plan/SIP 401(k)

At the end of the year, the Supplemental Income Plan (SIP) will be merged into the SIP 401(k) Plan. A number of announcements concerning this merger have been sent out to you. If you have questions concerning the merger and your accounts, please call 1-800-4-PRETAX.

Also, as of January 1, 2003, the SIP 401(k) Plan will have a new record keeper. New York Life Investment Management LLC, which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of New York Life Insurance Company, will replace State Street Research. This change will upgrade and expand the current investment choices and membership services. The first new investment options will become available in early January 2003. This change will not involve a "black-out" or "quiet" period. The Plan website and telephone number that you currently use to access your Plan account will remain the same. For questions please call: 1-800-4-PRETAX.

WCT Pension Plan Q&A

On the second Wednesday of every month, representatives from the Western Conference of Teamsters Pension Administrator come to Local 853's San Leandro offices. If you want to know what your pension benefit will be upon retirement, need to fill out retirement papers, or are just curious about your contribution record, this is the place to be. The counselor will bring your records. You must make an appointment first by calling 510-895-8853 or 800-400-1250.

Teamsters Local 853

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Voice of the members

What advice do you have for a new Local 853 member?



Arthur Bais
EMJ

"Join the union—it's the best thing for you. The union provides great benefits, and you can meet a lot of good friends."



Richard Davis
Costco — Hayward

"The union is good for the family, for the country and for your children. We have benefits, pension and establishment for education."



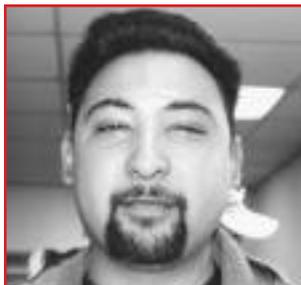
Cesar Martinez
Costo—Redwood City

"This is a great local. We have good representation in our stores, and they support us a lot."



Jerry Collier
East Bay Restaurant
Supply

"Follow the lead of your steward. Try to do the right thing at all times."



Arturo Martinez
Southern Wine & Spirits

"This is a strong union. Everybody's together on the issues and knows what's going on. It's awesome."

membership appreciation

November 9, 2002

Packed house celebrates unity, pride & solidarity



By Terry Post
Steward, Bode Gravel



Quite frankly, I'm getting sick and tired of attending these "Membership Appreciation Meetings" where hundreds and hundreds of bleary-eyed Local 853 members cram into a poorly ventilated hall leaving barely enough room to stand or breathe!

And as if it wasn't bad enough standing shoulder-to-shoulder with tons of Teamsters—there are no small Teamsters—frantic members were running up and down the aisles carrying TV's, DVD's, boom boxes and other large items, making space even more scarce. Long lines for free donuts, drinks, t-shirts and hats added to the already chaotic situation..

I just don't understand why Local 853 can't be like other labor organizations where nobody shows up . . . or cares, for that matter!

But seriously, folks . . .

That's right, another Annual Local 853 Membership Appreciation Meeting has come and gone. Though Bode had very few Teamsters in attendance, the turnout from the rest of the Local was impressive.

Among the crowd were Local 853 officers, organizers, office staff, retirees, old

members and new members. Local 921, the newspaper drivers, are now in Local 853—some of them even won prizes! And for all you amateur conspiracy theorists; no, I didn't win another TV.

Aloise addresses crowd

Local 853 Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise, just back from Washington, D.C., addressed the crowd, which included Rome's father, former Western Conference of Teamsters UPS Director, Vince Aloise. Rome stressed that the sole purpose of this meeting was for us to appreciate each other. He did attempt a little stand-up comedy routine which included Osama, bingo, sunburns and Viagra . . . keep your day job, Rome.



In spite of Rome being "challenged" when it comes to delivering comedy, the message he delivered concerning Local 853 was encouraging:

- Now in our 65th year, we are growing and getting stronger;
- Our contracts are the best in all industries;
- We are organizing new companies;
- We are going after owner-operators;
- 853 is highly respected (or feared?) by everyone.

But Rome warned that serious challenges lie ahead:

- Health care costs are skyrocketing, which will be felt by all union members in the form of increased contributions to health and welfare;
- The Bush administration is in control and is not particularly friendly to working people.

All in all, it was an inspiring meeting, one which more of you should have attended—you might have walked away with a free 32-inch TV.

It wasn't about the food, drink, gifts or the prizes. It was about unity, pride and solidarity. You would be hard-pressed to find a better local than this one.



Top: Member wins DVD; Lower Left: Recording Secretary Antonio Christian, President John Becker and Secty-Treas. Rome Aloise call out raffle winners; Lower Right: Jim McAvoy from Right Away Redy Mix collects his prize.

Around the Local



Laguna Honda Shop Steward John Clark, and Business Agent Dan Harrington congratulate each other after the Ordinance passed.

Laguna Honda workers get raises and cash settlement

After months of lobbying the City and County of San Francisco by members and staff of Local 853, the Board of Supervisors passed ordinance 167-02 on August 28, 2002. This ordinance amends the Memorandum of Understanding between the Teamsters and the City and County to allow for the pass through of State of California Medi-Cal funds to Teamster members working at a skilled nursing facility.

What does that mean? That all Local 853 members employed at Laguna Honda Hospital will share a lump sum settlement of more than \$17,400, and an hourly wage increase of \$1.50.

Another Teamster merger

After working together for more than a year at Local 853, Jesse Casqueiro, Local 853 organizer, married Jennifer Payne, contract administrator in the Local office, on September 28, 2002.

Jesse and Jennifer both come from Teamster families. His father has worked at Dryer's Ice Cream for 20 years and her mother works at the IBT as Associate Director of Education.

Local 853 officers and staff wish the couple much happiness.



MS Society declares Local 853 office manager top fundraiser



Local 853 Office Manager Janine Vanier (R) receives National Multiple Sclerosis Society Fund Raiser of the Year Award from Mary Lou Torre, V.P. of Development for the Society. Janine raised more than \$43,000 for MS research by mobilizing Teamsters to participate in the 2002 Walk-a-thon and Bike-a-thon.

Voice of the members

What advice do you have for a new Local 853 member?



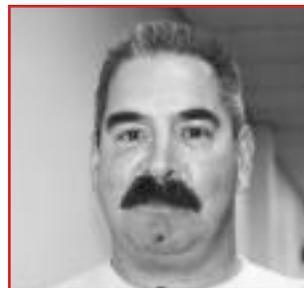
Armando De La Cruz
Pechiney Packaging

"Being in the union is really good because you get a lot of benefits. Be active, so you know what's going on."



Eugene Thomas
VWR International

"The union provides security. When you see what the Teamsters are all about, you'll know how important it is to support the union."



John Henry
Dean Foods

"Keep your head up. Be loyal to the union and be patient. We have to have unity—work together and don't be a crybaby."



Monica Lewis
Costco—Hayward

"Try to get as knowledgeable about your rights and definitely read that book. Also know who your shop steward is."