



C O N N E C T I O N S

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Hoffa wins re-election in a landslide

By a three-to-one margin, Teamster members re-elected incumbent James P. Hoffa to serve another five-year term as their General President. Hoffa's slate of vice-presidents and trustees was also elected in the vote-by-mail election concluded in November.

More Local 853 members voted in this election than did the members of any

Local in Northern California. And, they backed the Hoffa team by a margin of 84-16%, a stronger level of support than any other Local showed. Overall, Hoffa's margin of victory over challenger Tom Leedham was wider than many predicted.

"I know that our members don't automatically see how this election impacts their daily life," explained Secretary-

Treasurer Rome Aloise. "But I see it as a referendum on the leadership of this Local. When our members follow our recommendations as to how to vote, that means they trust the direction we're going. Let's face it, 20% of the people will vote against the incumbent, no matter who it is. I'm sure some members have issues with the current leadership, but they're clearly in the minority."

Aloise added that Teamster employers across the nation evaluate the turnout and the margin to determine the strength of member support for their leadership. "Voter turnout is way down in all national and local elections, so we hardly expect it to spike for the union election," Aloise added. "But employers will see that those who voted came out strongly for Hoffa."

Increasing Teamster power

Now that the election is over, Local and International leadership have plans to get back to the business of the union—organizing new members and strengthening Teamster contracts.

Local 853 has 35 contracts in various industries that our members work in coming due in 2007. "This is the meat and potatoes of what our union does for our members, and it will get 100% of our focus," said Aloise.

Welcome, Local 583-M members

Yes, that is Local 583! Now they are Local 853 members, as a result of the merger of Graphic Communication Conference Local 583-M into Local 853 effective December 1st. These new skilled craftworkers in the printing industry will add even greater diversity to the types of work Local 853 members perform. Working in job titles including pressmen, feeders, flyboys, color operators, proofers, JB operators, and roll tenders, they do high-end multi-color commercial printing work. They print annual reports, car books, promotional and sales brochures, food and wine labels, letterheads, envelopes, books, small newspapers, and many other types of specialty printing products. These members do the bindery work and finishing work, which includes cutting, folding, stitching, gluing drilling, trimming and collating.



Rome Aloise and Lee Lahtinen seal the deal.

Communications Division of Local 853 will stretch from Fresno to the Oregon border and into Reno, Nevada. Most of the current membership works in the San Francisco, San Jose, and Sacramento area. More than 500 active members are covered by 56 individual contracts.

"Our Executive Board and membership realized that we needed the advantages of joining a larger, stronger, and economically viable Local Union. After our International Union merged with the Teamsters International, we felt our best choice would be a Teamster Local," said Lee Lahtinen, President of Local 583-M.

"Local 853 has a reputation of strong and honest representation of their members, and their leadership is well respected. Our Executive Board and members passed the merger with flying colors. We look forward to building our Division within Local 853," added Lahtinen, who was instrumental in bringing the merger together along with Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise.

Lahtinen, Lennie Kuhls, and Debbie Trimble will come aboard as employees of Local 853 as a result of the merger.

"Unions in the printing industry go back to the mid 1880's. Their members have a proud tradition of solidarity and militancy," said Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise. "I am proud that they chose our Local. They will be a great addition to our membership and to Local 853."

The jurisdiction of the new Graphic

IBT Election Results

Hoffa:	173,095	65%
Leedham:	91,554	35%
Total vote:	264,819	18.52%

Elections are over—time to go back to work!

By **ROME ALOISE**

Our International election is over and General President Hoffa and General Secretary-Treasurer Keegel and their entire slate were elected with an overwhelming mandate for the future. I look forward to this administration continuing its good work for the next five years.

General President Hoffa has brought about many positive changes within our union, making sure we are set up to grow and increase our strength and power for the future. Secretary-Treasurer Keegel has also brought new energy to our union, particularly in the field of benefits—finding ways to use the power of our pension funds to help us organize and bring about meaningful change within the corporations in which we invest.

I personally want to thank those members of Local 853 who took the time to vote in our international union election. Although the turnout—both in our Local and nationally—was disappointing, Local 853 finished very high in relation to all the other Locals across the country, and we finished number one in both of the Northern California Joint Councils. I am pleased with our overwhelming vote for the Hoffa/Keegel slate. Employers definitely pay attention to the margin of victory in union elections.

Good changes in government

On the state and national election front, along with many other sectors of society, our members voted in large numbers to return the Democrats to power in both the House and the Senate. Obviously, as a union, we supported most of the Democratic candidates and it is good that the anti-worker

Republican-controlled legislature has been defeated. For too many years, bad laws have been fast-tracked to passage and unions haven't had a voice in Washington.

I am pleased with our Local's overwhelming vote for the Hoffa/Keegel slate. Employers definitely pay attention to the margin of victory in union elections.

Now it is crucially important that the people we put into office continue to support labor's agenda, as they promised. Too many times in the past, our own candidates have abandoned us and refused to support our issues. We need to keep the pressure on them in order to get the protections workers need for the future.

Health care is a huge issue. We'll need to find a way to insure the uninsured and to control costs through national insurance, single-payer insurance or some other

method. Health care, as we know it, is in jeopardy in the very near future if some-

thing is not done soon. We'll be asking for your help over and over again to keep the pressure on our elected representatives.



The year ahead

2007 will be a very busy year at the Local. We have more than 30 contracts up for negotiations, including major contracts in the dairy industry, warehouse and some of our larger single employers. We anticipate that health care costs will be the single biggest issue, but of course, pension and wages will also be on the table. We will strive, as always, to continue our past successes in negotiating the best contracts in the country for our members.

On a personal note, along with our officers, officials and staff, I want to wish all of our members and your families a happy holiday season and a very successful New Year!

Benefits & Announcements

WCT Pension to Increase Allocation

It's official. The Western Conference of Teamsters Pension Plan allocation rate will be raised to 1.65% for the year 2007 for active participants. Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise, who serves as a Trustee for the WCT plan, says that this increase continues the commitment made by the trustees toward reinstating the accrual rates as responsibly and prudently as possible.

It should also be noted that the plan will have no withdrawal liability, making it one of the most financially healthy and secure plans in the country.

WCT Pension Plan Q&A

On the second Wednesday of every month, a representative from the Western Conference of Teamsters Pension Administrator comes to Local 853's San Leandro office to answer your pension questions. Call 510-895-8853 or 800-400-1250 for an appointment.

SIP 401(k) Enrollment

Most Local 853 members are eligible for the SIP 401(k) Plan. If you are not yet enrolled, or wish to increase your pre-tax deferred amounts—check with your business agent, your company's HR department, or call 1-800-4-PRETAX [1-800-477-3829].

Monthly Meetings

Local 853's membership meetings are held the Second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. They are held in the West Bay and East Bay:

- 1700 Marina Blvd., San Leandro, or
 - 151 W. 20th Avenue, San Mateo, CA.
- Call 510-895-8853 to confirm location.

New West Bay Office

We've moved our office on the west side of the bay. Please note the new address: 151 W. 20th Avenue, San Mateo, CA.

Teamsters Local 853

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Local 853's Annual Membership Appreciation Meeting

By **TERRY POST**

Steward—Bode Concrete

The 2006 Membership Appreciation Meeting was held November 4. Fortunately, members were no longer subjected to the packed, sweat-inducing conditions at Local 853's hall, where we had to fight just for standing room. (And let me tell you, "standing room" is a whole different proposition in a room full of Teamsters as compared to, let's say, a room full of ballerinas.)

No, this time the members were subjected to the packed, sweat-inducing conditions at the Woodrow Wilson Elementary School Auditorium just down the street from Local 853. Approximately 450 anxious members, guests and retirees showed up to: (1) hear Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise's annual "State of the Union Address;" (2) receive raffle and door prizes; and, (3) fight for—you guessed it—standing room.

Note: because of recent comments I made about the crowded conditions at Membership Appreciation Meetings, Rome announced to the packed house that I was personally responsible for arranging for the next accommodations – any ideas?

Gifts, prizes and more . . .

This year's long list of great gifts included Local 853 shirts and jackets, DVD players, luggage, flat screen TVs and the Grand Prize—a laptop computer. Additionally, everyone received a folding lounge chair with the Local's logo emblazoned on the back. As

Rome said, "everyone thinks Teamsters sit on their asses all day, so I thought I would give them a chair to sit on."

Chuck Mack awed by turnout

Chuck Mack, Teamsters Western Region Vice President, opened the morning's festivities with some complimentary remarks about Local 853 and Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise. He seemed sincerely impressed with the overflow crowd and a bit nervous, causing him to accidentally rail against the labor record of Phil Angelides (of course, he meant Schwarzenegger, but his beet-red face exposed his embarrassment as the crowd roared with laughter). Chuck urged everyone to vote in the IBT and statewide elections. But mostly, the seasoned union official told us how great our Local was and how fortunate we were to be led by Rome Aloise. We agree.

Aloise's "State of the Union Address"

When Rome took the stage, he held up the elongated black bag with the lounge chair in it. As if to taunt his detractors he joked that in order to organize non-union companies, everyone would be given a bazooka!

Once the laughter died down, Rome prefaced his 2006 State of the Union Address with a comment about an e-mail I had sent him saying the Membership Appreciation Meeting was like going to a rescue mission in the Tenderloin; you had to hear the sermon before



Clockwise from top: The standing room only crowd; Local 853 President John C. Becker, Sr.; Teamsters Western Region VP Chuck Mack; Rome Aloise pick the prize winners; Bill Carter, from Bluelinx, wins one of the prizes; three members choosing their prize; Mark Littorini; goodies available to win.



Just before the November election, we asked members if they believe it makes a difference who gets elected to state and federal office...

packs them in

you got fed. Evidently, the “intense” pressure I put on him shortened his speech considerably.

Graphic example of Local 853’s growth

Rome introduced Lee Lahtinen, Secretary-Treasurer of the Graphic Communications Conference (GCC) Local 583M. The GCC was formed on January 1, 2005 when the Graphic Communications International Union (GCIU) and the Teamsters officially joined forces. Now more than 60,000 GCIU members in the U.S. comprise the new GCC. On Monday, August 7, 2006, Local 583’s membership approved merging with Local 853 by a 90% margin. The merger brings approximately 500 new members into Local 853 and Rome was proud to welcome them.

401(k) is for everyone

Rome urged everyone to put at least 3% of their paycheck into their 401(k). He acknowledged the complexity of figuring out how best to invest your hard-earned money, but offered some help in the form of a new fund called the Freedom Fund.

In essence, a team of investors at the SIP/401(k) fund will customize your account according to age, years of service, aims, commitments, etc. Younger members might invest more aggressively while members closer to retirement would have a more conservative approach. This fund virtually eliminates the need for the member to endure the uncertainty of investing in stocks and bonds.

continued on other side



Recording Secretary Antonio Christian and Secretary-Treasurer Hathaway Dinwiddie, shows off his laptop; the stash of



**Harry Arroyo
Joe Hensen ???**

“I think so—it definitely makes a difference. That’s why I vote.”



**Leo Macasigan
SF Chronicle**

“I support the union and trust their judgment. They encourage us to vote, so I will.”



**Hannah Stoecker
Gillig**

“Yes—we’ve got to get Bush out as well as those who support him. This war is just wrong. We also have to get Schwarzenegger out!”



**Randy Reynoso
Berkeley Farms**

“I don’t think so. Arnold says one thing and does something else. He has two faces. But the Democrats aren’t stronger than the Republicans.”

“Today, working families have new reason to believe in the ability of their government to better their lives, as Teamster endorsed candidates across the country prevailed at the ballot box.... Now is the time for action on issues such as universal health care, retirement security, the Employee Free Choice Act, fair trade agreements, safe highways and national security. This new Congress must reverse action on the Bush administration’s misplaced priorities.”

—IBT General President James P. Hoffa on the 2006 elections

Local 853 membership meeting

continued from inside

Next year's challenge

The workload Rome described is a quick lesson about being a union official when he announced that Local 853 would have to negotiate 35 separate contracts in 2007. Rome is also negotiating some national contracts, including COSTCO on the East and West coasts. That's a hell-of-a workload and a hell-of-a responsibility.

The real state of our union

Local 853 is widely regarded as one of the best locals in the entire Teamsters Union. As I looked around the room at those 450 attendees, it was clear that the quality of our Local rests with the membership.

We don't look alike and we don't think alike, but we are all in this together. Our bond is our daily work under contracts negotiated by union officials, business representatives and stewards—ratified by the membership. Without a contract, we would work at the whim of the bosses. Without our union leaders, we would have little direction. Without the membership, the union would be no more. Like I said, we are all in this together.

So, in 2006, we are numerically strong and financially stable. We have the best contracts, including the highest wages, the best health and welfare plans and the best pensions. Our Local 853 officers and business representatives are accessible, knowledgeable and unafraid to stand up for the members. Our members are tough, hard working, independent and smart.

Is it perfect? NO. But we can make it better through hard work and solidarity. That's the real state of our union.

New San Leandro mayor visits membership meeting



Newly-elected San Leandro Mayor, Tony Santos

Just three days before the election, San Leandro city council member in the running for mayor, Tony Santos, saw the Teamster truck outside Woodrow

Wilson Elementary School. "This is my Council district," Santos said, "and I had to find out if there was an issue I could help out with."

Santos was confident that he would be elected mayor. "I'm the labor-endorsed candidate and we've got a tremendous campaign going for the Living Wage. If I'm elected, the living wage law will finally go through."

Santos won with a 58% margin. The Council is slated to vote on the living wage ordinance in January.

Does it make a difference in your life who gets elected to state and federal office?



Ken Olson
Cemex

"Yes it makes a difference. We've seen what's going on with Schwarzenegger—it'll be the same nonsense it was the first three years. And, he's got his eye on national office."



Hoai Stollberg
Berkeley Farms

"I voted for Angelides because he supports the workers; he supports stronger unions; and will work to keep our jobs.

These politicians will actually do something for us — or to us!"



Victor Penney
Cemex

"Elections are important. All the candidates are different—they have different ideas. Some work, some don't."



Everett Hammons
SF Chronicle

"Are you kidding? The U.S. working class feeds both parties. We want the best benefits for working people but Arnold screwed up workers comp. I just wish we had a better choice."



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Local 853 – organizing and building a stronger union

*Happy Holidays
from the officers & staff of Local 853*



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*Wishing you and your family
a safe, healthy and prosperous 2007*

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