



# CONNECTIONS

Volume VI, No. 1

Spring, 2005

*A shop steward gives his perspective*

## Members ratify 2-year ready mix contract

By Terry Post

Shop Steward—Bode Gravel

On a cool, rainy Sunday morning, over 300 ready mix Teamsters from four San Francisco Bay Area locals (78, 287, 315 & 853) gathered to vote on a proposed extension of our current labor contract with the Aggregates & Concrete Association (ACA).

The overflow crowd started out skeptical about the ensuing vote, as details of the proposal were only known to a few individuals. The lack of information made many Teamsters concerned that the news would be bad—after all, why would you keep good news a secret?

Once the terms of the proposal were presented and the arguments heard, the two-year extension passed with an 83% majority.

It wasn't always that easy. Just a couple of weeks earlier most of those same Teamsters were wondering if there was going to be a strike. The employers couldn't decide if they wanted to enter contract talks as one entity or to negotiate each company's labor agreement separately.

The sticking point was Cemex, the Mexico-based multinational corporation that had recently purchased RMC. Cemex is widely known for instituting the "Cemex Way" once they take over another company. In general, Cemex replaces most of the management with their own people and put into place new, more stringent workplace rules and practices.

Apparently, this was Cemex's design for the Bay Area. Rumors were widespread concerning so-called "pay-per-load" compensation, loss of seniority, 20% health and welfare contributions and other schemes to increase efficiency and profit.

However, Local 853 Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise and the Teamsters had other ideas. After months and months of phone calls, emails and informal meetings between the employers and the Union, Secretary-Treasurer Aloise managed to negotiate a \$4.25 raise over the course of the next two years (with no language changes).

For all but the most skeptical, the raise was welcomed news. Not only did we avert potentially dangerous negotiations and the real threat of a costly strike, we also realized a raise that was, quite frankly, more than any of us expected—thanks mostly to the efforts of Rome Aloise.

Obviously, some members desired changes in the contract, not only in language but also in wages and benefits. While it's true that certain sections of our agreement need to be revisited, the issue in 2006 was only about an extension. Had we rejected the extension



*Ready-mix members from four Locals review the details of their contract extension before casting their vote.*

and opted for open contract talks, the entire contract would have been subject to negotiation. Then we would have been talking about pay-per-load compensation, loss of seniority, and so on.

Quite frankly—and even the employers agree with this—the time was not right for open negotiations. Cemex and Hanson are relatively new players in Bay Area ready mix; they have had little exposure to the way things are done here. By extending the contract two years, the union and these very powerful companies can grow more accustomed to each other, hopefully making negotiations in 2008 a little easier.

The contract extension can certainly be viewed as a victory for the union. But it is also a victory for keeping negotiations civil and reasonable, which, in turn, manifests itself in ensuring that Bay Area ready mix will remain union.

Of course, it won't be long before we have to do it all again. For now, we need to work according to the contract, giving the

employer a fair days work for a fair days pay...and we need to take pride in our union. If we just do those simple things, our leverage at the next negotiations will be greatly enhanced.

Finally, on a personal note, I'd just like to say that as a 25-year Teamster and long-time steward, I plan to do my part. As always, it is an honor and a privilege to work with Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise and the rest of the officers and staff of Local 853.



*By 83% margin, members vote for extension.*



**Albert McCray**  
RMC Oakland

*"I think it's a great deal—we haven't had such a good 2-year deal for at least the 10 years I've been in the union. Now, even the Health and Welfare doesn't come out of our wages."*



**Veronica Carver**  
Cemex

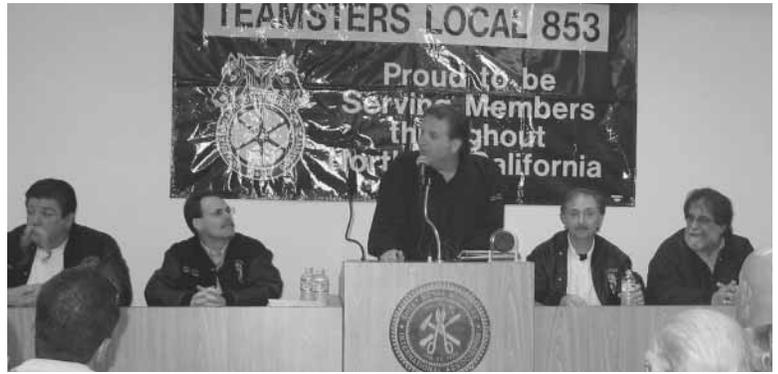
*"It's a good deal for the short term. I would like to see it longer. If we were non-union—that would have been very bad."*



**Brett Yahne**  
Cemex

*"Two years will go fast, then they'll come at us with everything they've got, and Cemex will try to do it the Cemex way. The union is great—they watch out for you."*

## Presenting the terms of the agreement



Local 853 Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise, who chaired the negotiating team, presents the two-year contract extension to the members. Committee members are (LtoR): George Netto, Local 287; Bill Hoyt, Local 287; Dale Robbins, Local 315 and Phil Tarantino, Local 853.

### The terms of the agreement

June 1, 2006:	\$2.00 to wages
January 1, 2007:	\$0.65 to H&W
June 1, 2007:	\$1.00 to wages
January 1, 2008:	\$0.60 to H&W

That comes to \$4.25 (\$3.00 to wages and \$1.25 to health & welfare) over two years!

Obviously, \$3.00 into wages and \$1.25 into H&W over those two years is significantly better than our current contract, under which we would have received \$2.20 total over the two years (health and welfare would have been paid out of that \$2.20). Do the math: \$2.20 minus the \$1.25 needed for H&W would have left just \$ .95 in our pockets. Under the extension we are left with a whopping \$3.00.

As in 2001, most of the wage increase has been front-loaded, meaning we will realize significant returns sooner and longer. Straight time alone will result in \$10,400 (not including H&W) over the course of the two year extension (based on 2080 hours per year). Throw in some overtime and you can see how significant this raise is.

—Terri Post



**Ron Enos Hansen**

*"This is a good contract for the times. Without a union—we wouldn't be here. But we do need to get stronger."*



**Fernando Tovar**  
Central

*"Two years will go by too quickly. I'd have liked a four-year contract. There's nothing like having a union, but I think we could have gotten more."*



**Carl McGeachy**  
Granite Rock

*"They'll take this deal to my employer, who's not part of this deal, and he'll do what he pleases. Working non-union? I can't even speculate."*



**Darrell McGlaston Hansen**

*"This deal is satisfactory. These days, no question about it, the union enabled us to get this deal."*

## From the desk of Rome Aloise

April, 2006

Can you help?

We are gearing up for the annual MS Walk, which will be May 6th this year.

As you know from my past requests, my assistant, Janine Vanier is an MS victim. I use the word "victim" lightly, as she has turned this devastating negative into an incredible positive. Janine has been one of the most prolific fundraisers for Multiple Sclerosis research in the country. She has been honored many times for her unselfish dedication to helping others with this disease, counseling fellow MS sufferers, and raising money for research to finally find a cure for Multiple Sclerosis.

Every day I am personally encouraged and uplifted by Janine's enthusiasm and energy. When many people who have suffered with this disease as long as she are now extremely disabled, Janine continues to work every

day and take care of everything that I need. Besides being my right arm in so many ways, she continues to help others. She continues to be an amazing inspiration to me.

### **An MS story close to home**

In May of 1987, Janine Vanier awoke to an excruciating headache and complete blindness in one eye. An MRI revealed tell-tale lesions, and she was diagnosed with relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis.

Janine is Local 853's office manager. Afraid of losing her job, she hid her symptoms from her Teamster coworkers. But after 12 years of secrecy, Janine was tired of hiding her MS. When she broke the news to her boss, Rome Aloise, "The first words out of his mouth were, 'You don't have to worry at all; your job is guaranteed.' The next thing he said was, 'How can the Teamsters help?'"

With resources from the local chapter of the MS Society, she explained what life with MS is like and how fundraising can help. "When people see how MS affected me personally, they lavished support," Janine recounts. "Rome's support by contacting people to raise aware-

ness and donations and with the dedication of my Walk team, the TeamMSters, we raised over \$102,000 for the 2005 Walk. The chapter and the TeamMSters are astonishing," she adds.

Janine volunteers at every event her chapter organizes. "I love speaking to groups about MS and how each of us can help. I am here to help; and people know that. Many times people will send their newly diagnosed friend or relative to me for guidance and reassurance that there is hope. I've turned the biggest negative into the biggest positive," she adds.

"Opening up about having MS and getting involved with volunteering and fundraising has changed my life. I, and the Teamsters across the nation and Canada, are helping those affected by Multiple Sclerosis within our Northern California Chapter, as well as the global research community."

## **2006 MS Walk** **Join the TeamMSters**



### **Alameda's Crown Beach**



**Saturday  
May 6, 2006**

8:00 A.M. registration  
9:00 A.M. Walk begins  
— 5k or 10k routes

*Join us on the beach in Alameda. Enjoy breakfast and brief warm-up session before heading onto the trails. Whether you choose to walk or volunteer for this event, enjoy the views, lunch, raffles and entertainment with friends and family.*



*For more information, contact Janine at 510-895-8853*

I am asking you, your organization or Foundation, to do what you can to make this year's MS Walk another success, and give hope to the 400,000 people in the U.S. with Multiple Sclerosis. If you feel you can help, please mail your contribution to:

**NMSS MS WALK**  
c/o Teamsters Local 853  
2100 Merced St., Suite B  
San Leandro, CA 94577

Again, my sincere thanks for anything you can do.

Sincerely,

Rome A. Aloise  
Secretary-Treasurer, IBT Local 853

*The above letter was sent to Teamster employers and vendors. In past years, this method of outreach has raised tens of thousands of dollars for research into a cure for MS. If you would like to help, you can join the TeamMSters at Crown Beach on May 6, or send in your donation made out to NMSS MS Walk to the above address.*



## Solidarity and trust enable Local to reach goals

We have many contracts expiring this year and our first settlement resulted in an impressive two-year extension for our Ready Mix members. You can read about the great agreement in other parts of this newsletter, but I need to say that this victory was accomplished due to two important factors: the first is solidarity of the membership and second is our members' trust in their leadership. These two simple things may be basic tenets of unionism but they are what enabled us to get the best two-year deal in the history of the Ready Mix contract.

This spirit of solidarity must now be utilized to deal with the upcoming Graniterock negotiations. This employer did not sign on to the extension like the other Ready Mix companies it competes with. As a union, we need to prepare ourselves if this company decides to undercut its competitors. We will start a voluntary assessment with our Ready Mix members if the Graniterock negotiations begin to flounder.

I recently attended the Federated Stores proposal meeting. This unit went from a high of 800 members to 200 members due to changes in distribution to Macy's and Bloomingdales. The members are particularly concerned about wages and the cost of health care. These members may need help in accomplishing their goals for this contract; we will call upon you in the future to assist them.

Also coming due for re-negotiation this spring and summer are the Master Construction Agreement, Genesis, Anixter,

Iron Mountain and several other contracts. It will be a busy time for all of your business agents, and a time that we all have to support each other.

*Two simple things...solidarity of the membership and trust in their leadership... enabled us to get the best two-year deal in the history of the Ready Mix contract.*

### Build-up to IBT Convention

We started off the New Year by nominating delegates to attend the International Convention, which takes place in Las Vegas at the end of June. The members elected the Aloise/Becker slate by acclamation.

Our charge is to represent our members' interests when the convention votes about the International Union's direction for the coming five years and nominates candidates for the General Executive Board.

The actual election for the General Executive Board will be held by mail in November and will allow each and every member to vote for the General President and the union's Executive Board.

The Teamsters Union is the only major union in the country that uses the "one member, one vote" rule for the election of its International officers. This is a very complicated and expensive way to elect our officers, and I hope that the membership

participates in numbers that justify the expense and time-consuming effort.

### 401(k) Availability

Local 853 is unique because most of our members have the advantage of having both a defined benefit pension plan (Western Conference of Teamsters Pension Trust Fund) and the availability of a defined contribution plan (Supplemental Income 401(k) Plan). The 401(k) plan allows you to save money, **pre-tax**, on which you would otherwise pay taxes.

For those members who don't want to actively manage their retirement savings accounts, the 401(k) plan recently started to offer "Lifestyle" funds through Fidelity Freedom Funds—more information is elsewhere in this newsletter. The Lifestyle funds enable the professionals at Fidelity to invest and manage your money based on your predicted retirement date. These funds provide you tax advantages and professional management of your money for the future.

Many of our smartest members take advantage of this tool, but many do not. As a trustee on a number of Teamster plans, I can tell you that you are losing out if you don't take advantage of this benefit.

To get started, talk to your business agent, shop steward, human resource manager, call 800-4 PRETAX (800-477-3829), or go on-line at [www.nylim.com/sipt](http://www.nylim.com/sipt).

## Teamsters Local 853

**CONNECTIONS** is published quarterly for \$3 per year by Teamsters Local 853, 2100 Merced Street, Suite B, San Leandro, CA, a non-profit organization. Postage paid at San Leandro, CA.

**Postmaster:** Send address changes to: Teamsters Local 853, 2100 Merced Street, Suite B, San Leandro, CA 94577

**Members:** Send address changes and comments to the above address or e-mail us: [connections@teamsters853.org](mailto:connections@teamsters853.org)

*Debra Chaplan, Editor*

## Benefits & Announcements

### 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
  - Laborers' Union Hall, 300-7th Avenue San Mateo
- Call 510-895-8853 to confirm location.

## Take the first step to ousting Arnold!

On Tuesday, June 6, join Teamsters around the state to vote for:

\*\*\* **Phil Angelides for Governor** \*\*\*

Other Teamster endorsements include:

Debra Bowen for Secretary of State and Joe Dunn for Controller.



Last day to register to vote:

**May 22**

Vote in advance by absentee ballot or vote in person on:

**Tuesday, June 6**



## Local elects 2006 International Convention Delegates

Local 853 held nominations for delegates and alternate delegates to the 2006 Teamsters National Convention in January. The Convention, which takes place every five years, has two important functions:

1) Delegates have an opportunity to amend the constitution that governs all members and all Local Unions.

2) Since 1991, nominations are held for positions on the General Executive Board, including the two top jobs in the Union—the General President and the General Secretary-Treasurer.

Following the convention, in October and November, ballots will be mailed out to the 1.4 million Teamster members so they can directly vote for candidates running for these positions.

“As the only International Union where members vote for these positions for their Local Union delegates elections, the Teamsters are the most democratic of all unions,” says Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise.

The delegates and alternates are entrusted with working for the best interests of the membership. Their job is to represent you, their constituency, and to make sure the constitution—the contract between the International Union and the Locals—is designed to meet the challenges that face our union in the coming years.

Neither the nominated delegates or the alternate delegates who ran on the Aloise/Becker slate faced any opposition, so all were elected by acclamation. The elected delegates are: Rome Aloise, John Becker, Phil Tarantino, Antonio Christian, Bo Morgan, and Dan Harrington. The alternates are: Mike Furtado, Julie Molina, Jeff Belunza, Stu Helfer, Pete Easton, and Steve Zucker.

## Teamsters set national strategy for Iron Mountain contracts, organizing

Local 853 hosted a meeting of Teamster Locals from across California, New Jersey, Ohio and Georgia who have business with Iron Mountain. Jon Hartough from the IBT Office of Strategic Research and Campaign and several IBT organizers also participated.

The March 1 meeting was called in response to the three organizing campaigns around the country, and the fact that all other contracts have either expired or are expiring by the end of April.

The meeting resulted in the establishment of a national committee which will have the goals of organizing more Iron Mountain facilities and moving toward a National Agreement.

## New 401(k) “Lifestyle Funds” a good investment option for some members

The Trustees of the Supplemental Income 401(k) Plan are pleased to announce the addition of several “lifestyle funds” to the Plan’s investment option menu.

A lifecycle fund is an investment fund featuring an asset allocation mix of stocks, bonds, and short-term instruments. The asset allocation mix of these lifecycle funds is driven by the year closest to your desired retirement date. For example, the investment strategy of the lifecycle fund targeted to people in their 20’s is aggressive and growth oriented, while the fund designed for those in their 50’s has a more conservative growth strategy.

The names of the Funds correspond to the retirement date. The “2015 Fund” has an investment strategy based on the assumption that the investor plans to retire within sometime around the year 2015. The “2035 Fund” is intended

for someone who expects to keep working for another thirty years.

As of February 1, 2006, you may transfer existing account balances into these options or select them as investment options for future contributions. Access your account at [www.nylim.com/sip](http://www.nylim.com/sip) or by calling the Participant Account Service Center at 1-800-560-3243.

If you have any questions about the Plan’s investment options and wish to receive a prospectus for the new lifestyle funds, or any of the Plan’s investment options, please contact Plan Investment Representatives at 1-800-477-3829.

Investors are asked to consider the investment objectives, risks, and charges and expenses of the investment carefully before investing. The prospectus contains this and other information about the investment company. Please read the prospectus carefully before investing.

### New Fund Ticker Symbols

Fidelity Advisor Freedom Income Fund (Class A)	FAFAX
Fidelity Advisor Freedom 2010 Fund (Class A)	FACFX
Fidelity Advisor Freedom 2015 Fund (Class A)	FFVAX
Fidelity Advisor Freedom 2020 Fund (Class A)	FDAFX
Fidelity Advisor Freedom 2025 Fund (Class A)	FATWX
Fidelity Advisor Freedom 2030 Fund (Class A)	FAFEX
Fidelity Advisor Freedom 2035 Fund (Class A)	FATHX
Fidelity Advisor Freedom 2040 Fund (Class A)	FAFFX



PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
SAN LEANDRO, CA  
PERMIT No. 311

## *Local 853 – organizing and building a stronger union*

### **Teamsters lead protest of Dubai Port deal**



*Local 853 members joined Bay Area Teamsters and Longshore workers on February 22 to protest the takeover of several U.S. ports by a Dubai-owned company. The Teamsters Union called for U.S. ports to have the same security standards as air-ports.*

*After much outcry around the nation, the company agreed to drop its interest in all U.S. ports except for Miami.*

