

What do you think about Occupy Wall Street's message?



Robert Preston
Peerless Coffee
40 year Teamster

They have the right idea. Unfortunately, a group of people make it look bad. The big banks are squeezing smaller people too hard and not allowing us to grow as they grow.



Gabriel Valles
Cemex-SF – 25 year Teamster

I agree with them. We need to stand up with poor people. I've seen it on the TV News. The demonstrations really helped me think about the issues.



Greg Szatmari
Longview Fiber
26 year Teamster

It's about democracy and the union and union jobs. The movement is good but it has to be done right. No violence. That's what'll shut it down. I think it should grow. The 1%

should pay their fair share. They wouldn't be as rich as they are if they paid their fair share all along. The working man pays 33%, the rich pay 15%, and they're not employing people.



Bette Valle
Certainteed – 2 year Teamster

The cops are acting out of proportion; they should let the people be because they're not doing anything wrong. We work our butts off and the rich don't do anything while the poor are getting poorer.

Sisters in Solidarity volunteers at Habitat for Humanity



Teamster sisters do some volunteer home-building. From left: Pam Gaskill, Stacy Alvelais, Janice Johnson and Kim Drinkward.

On August 23, members of Local 853's new women's committee volunteered a day to help build a house in Pittsburg through Habitat for Humanity. "It was great to do the work," says committee chair Pam Gaskill. "And it was a good opportunity to let people know what the Teamsters are, and the role we play in our community."

Sisters in Solidarity meets a half-hour before the regular union meetings on the second Thursday of each month, and the committee would like to encourage all women members to join. The group is working to plan some educational forums about how to be effective union members. For more info, contact Pam at pgkjoy@gmail.com.

Stewards learn about member involvement

On October 1, IBT Training and Development Dept. leader Sally Payne (right) led an all-day seminar for about 200 of Local 853's stewards. The main topic was how to build membership participation in the union and involve new members.





Presorted Standard
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
OAKLAND, CA
PERMIT No. 379

Local 853 – organizing and building a stronger union



Happy Holidays

from the officers & staff of Local 853

Executive Board

Rome Aloise—Secretary-Treasurer
Steve Mack—President
Bo Morgan—Vice President
Antonio Christian—Recording Secretary
Mike Amaral—Trustee
Robert Baker—Trustee
Ron Valdez—Trustee

Business Agents

Dan Harrington	Adolph Felix
Bob Strelor	Lou Valletta
Stu Helfer	Efren Alarcon
Jesse Casqueiro	Dan Varela
John Arnolfo	Lon Schmidt
Dave Ellis	Lennie Kuhls

Office Staff

Janine Vanier	Lydia Pinedo
Jennifer Casqueiro	Sue Watkins
Kim Drinkward	Hilda Cornejo
Janice Johnson	Denice Kransky
Eve Miller	Lupe Ramos

Advisory Board

Jeff Belunza
Don Wallace

Sergeant at Arms

Doug Radonich

Newsletter Editor

Debra Chaplan

Webmaster

Marc Miyashiro



CONNECTIONS

Volume XI, No. 2

December, 2011

A steward's view of the 2011 annual membership appreciation meeting

By Terry Post, Bode Gravel

Local 853's 12th Annual Membership Appreciation Meeting was bigger and more diverse than ever. It was standing room only as more than 1,000 members, spouses, children, retirees, officers and staff gathered for free flu shots, free shirts, coffee and donuts, raffle prizes, a dose of solidarity, a chance to see old friends and meet new ones and, of course, to hear Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise's annual State-of-the-Union address.

Unfortunately, the social, economic and political environment currently impacting the membership lent a rather somber tone to this year's meeting. Every Local 853 member has been hit hard by Wall Street's destruction of the economy and corporate America's War on Workers. In response, workers across the country have fought back with electoral victories in Ohio and Wisconsin and direct action in solidarity with the Occupy Wall Street Movement. Amid this chaos, many Teamsters were looking to Aloise for guidance, answers and, most of all, leadership. Rome did not disappoint them.

War on Workers

"I want you to know there's a war on workers going on here," Rome proclaimed, "and it's not just against public sector workers. We've got employers coming after us. (They) think because society thinks it's okay to go after those public sector workers, then it must be okay to go after you, too. Without a union ... workers are getting killed."

Rome warned the membership not to take what they have for granted.

"Are you ready to fight to keep what you've got?" he asked.

"YES!" the crowd responded defiantly.

Rome didn't just leave it at that. He gave the members statistics showing that workers' wages were in decline while CEOs amassed huge salary increases, 550 times

more than the average worker. He detailed exactly who controls the wealth in this country, with the shocking statistic that, in 2010, the top one percent of Americans owned 42.7 percent of the wealth.

Occupy Wall Street

As we have come to expect over the years, Rome did what few labor leaders in this country have had the courage to do; he challenged his members.

"Are you outraged that health care costs are out of control?" Rome yelled into the microphone.

"Are you outraged that pensions are under attack?"

"Are you outraged the corporations are sitting on more cash than at anytime in history while millions of able-bodied workers are out of work and can't find a job?"

"Are you outraged that, for the first time in this country's history, our children ... can't have the kind of lifestyle that we have, and they may never have a house or a pension?"

Each time Rome threw questions out onto the floor, the members responded louder and louder. There was a pause ...

"Then you should support the Occupy

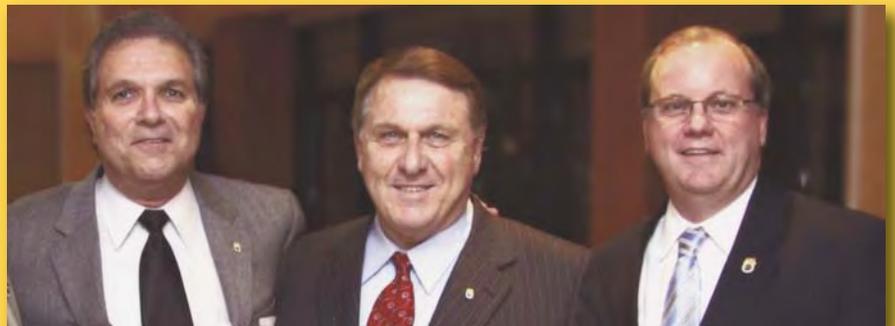
Wall Street Movement!" Rome shouted.

"We have to incorporate the message of Occupy Wall Street so it becomes part of what our political movement is," Rome told the membership.

Rome concluded by urging members to get involved by supporting the Occupy Wall Street Movement, coming to the aid of fellow workers during labor disputes, registering to vote, joining DRIVE, and volunteering during elections. Most importantly, he urged members to put aside personal issues, particularly conservative ones, that actually help to keep workers down. The crowd erupted in approval.

This is why Local 853 is special and why the annual membership appreciation meeting is so well attended (aside from all the free stuff). We have a diverse, dedicated and knowledgeable membership that sincerely cares about its union, isn't afraid to fight and never hesitates to respond to their leadership. And, of course, we have leadership that respects and appreciates the membership.

Once again, this is a very, very special labor organization, one I am extremely proud to be part of.



Elected!

Local 853 Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise (left) was elected to serve a five-year term as International Vice President At-Large of the Teamsters, gaining the support of 86% of Local 853 members. He'll be serving with General President Jim Hoffa (center) and newly-elected General Secretary-Treasurer Ken Hall (right).

Local's strength will be put to the test in 2012

Our Local Union is one of the largest in the country as well as one of the more high profile Locals. We are a microcosm of the labor movement as a whole.

When Tea Party politicians launched the **War on Workers** in Wisconsin, Ohio, and other states, we helped where we could and watched the fight from a distance. We are fortunate of course, that the attack on public sector workers didn't come to our state, and this is directly because of Labor's participation in the electoral process here in California. Our members vote and support candidates that support workers, and although we don't get everything we ask for from these leaders, they don't come after us either.

Unfortunately, the **War on Workers** has come to our Local in the form of attacks on a number of our contracts. As we go to press, we are poised for a fight with PrimeSource, which is attempting to take away our members' pensions. Dreyer's Ice Cream, now owned by the global conglomerate, Nestlé, is attempting to strip our members of their income formula, costing them a reduction in their annual earnings. Sysco continues to mistreat our members. And, of course, our long fight with VWR continues.

More than any other time that I can recall, we are under attack at Local 853. We will need to bring our members together to support the fight against these employers and any others that think they can use the economy and political environment to take our hard-won benefits and earnings away from us. As diverse as our members and their jobs are, we have always had a strong reputation of joining together to help each other. We will certainly need to be together in this coming year. **Be ready!**

Again, this year, the Membership Appreciation Day was a great success. I love to see our members come together, meet each other, and join in a celebration of our Local. We are indeed a unique group of workers from many different races, ethnicities and cultures, but we move in one direction when it comes to our union. It makes me proud to be a Local 853 member.

During this year, a number of our officers and officials retired. I always have mixed emotions when our people leave, as they take with them dedication, commitment and vast experience. But then again, it is a tough and demanding job that takes its toll on those that serve the membership, and the ability to retire with dignity and

respect and to enjoy the future is something I wish for each of our members.

So to the following friends and colleagues, I wish a happy, healthy and long retirement:

- **Lee Lahtinen**, GCIU director and former head of Local 583 GCIU;
- **Mike Furtado**, Trustee from Berkeley Farms; Mike came over as a Trustee from Local 302 and served Local 853 for many years;
- **Jeff Belunza**, Trustee from Gillig Corporation, who also served many years on the Executive Board; and of course,
- **John Becker**, our former President and Vice President who was mentioned in a prior edition. They all deserve our thanks and respect.

Finally, I want to thank all of you who took the time to participate and vote in the election for our national officers and for your support of my campaign. While less than 20% of our members voted, we had the highest vote margin for the Hoffa-Hall slate.

Happy Holidays to you and your families, and when you give thanks, please remember your union.



Announcements

WCT Pension Plan Q&A

On the second Wednesday of every month, a representative from the WCT 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].

Check out Local 853's website

Go to www.teamsters853.org to see what the Local has been up to between newsletters. Also get business forms and other union resources.

CONNECTIONS is published quarterly by Teamsters Local 853, 2100 Merced St., San Leandro, CA, a non-profit organization. Postage paid at San Leandro, CA.

Postmaster: Send address changes to: Teamsters Local 853, 2100 Merced St., San Leandro, CA 94577

Members: Send address changes and comments to the above address or e-mail us at connections@teamsters853.org

Charge your union dues

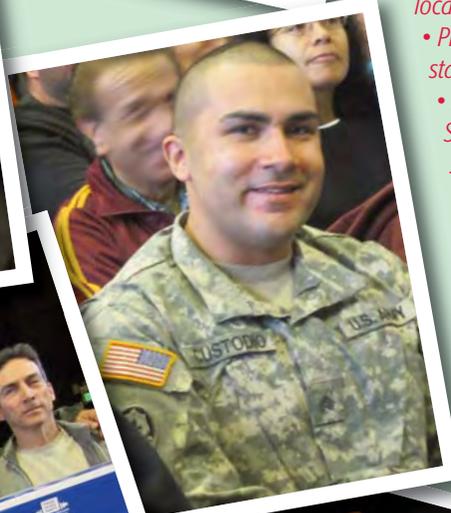
In our continuing effort to make dues payments easier and more convenient, Local 853 is now offering monthly credit card payments for your dues. For more information on this program, please contact the Local Union office at 510-895-8853.

Monthly union meetings

Local 853's membership meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in San Leandro, (except for October, when it is held in San Mateo):

- 2100 Merced St., San Leandro, or
- 151 W. 20th Avenue, San Mateo, CA.

Membership Appreciation



Clockwise from top:

- More than 1,000 members and family members attended the event on November 5, completely filling the John Muir Middle School auditorium;
- The raffle included 200 Teamster 853 jackets and vests;
- Some of Local 853's business agents;
- Trustee Mike Amaral with Carmello Anzalone who works at Costco in South San Francisco and may be the local's oldest member (but he won't tell his age);
- President Steve Mack and S-T Rome Aloise on stage just before the raffle begins;
- From left: Richard Leong, Oakland Coliseum; Mike Smith, Berkeley Farms; Aurora Quiroz, T. Martinez; John Joseph, Cost Plus and Joseph Moreno, Berkeley Farms. This lucky group of members won 32 inch LCD screen TVs; (Moreno won a 42 incher!);
- Angelo Custolio, works at Berkeley Farms and just got back from serving two tours in Iraq;
- Rome Aloise presents former President John Becker and former Trustee Mike Furtado with plaques to honor their years of service to the union;
- The Joint Council 7 truck makes an appearance at the event.

2011



What do you think about Occupy Wall Street's message?



Charles JR MacIntire
Aramark Uniform
12 year Teamster

"OWS gets people talking about big business. The 1% are making all the money on the backs of working people. I went to Occupy San Francisco with my wife and dog—it was great!"



Frank Soares
Central Concrete Supply
13 year Teamster

"They have their purpose. I wish somebody with a name would speak for them. I don't know about spending the night. We're losing our middle class. I support the movement and the issue."



Alfredo Lopez
Gillig Corp. — 35 yr. Teamster

"They're wasting city money. The issue is good, but they need to organize differently, like the Teamsters. The rich should pay the same level of taxes as poor people. Business should be paying taxes."



Mabel Runner (& Melia)
Kraft Foods —37 yr. Teamster

"I understand what they're trying to do. I wouldn't want to camp out myself though. Wealthy people should pay their fair share, but they don't want to give up their wealth."



Shane Keith
Cargill Salt — 1 year Teamster

"They're doing the right thing protesting. They're being heard, that's for sure. The 1% should be taxed; that's just fairness. It should be equal, no matter what tax bracket you're in."