

Union People

Jaime Rivera
Cemex
10 years in Local 853



Challenge: Finding the balance between the union and management.

Reward: Doing what's best for the members since we all have

a good job and want to continue to move forward.

Aukuso Samifua
Anheuser Busch/Horizon
3 years in Local 853



Challenge: Communication. Keeping the members duly informed. It's a constant struggle between management and the members.

Reward: When you get to see the members appreciate your efforts and see the workplace get better, and they're happy to come to work and feel that camaraderie.

Kadi Ingram
Young's Market
15 years in Local 853



Challenge: Introducing new employees to the union and getting people to understand that we are there to help them work.

Because we don't work in an office, it's hard for members to know us.

Reward: Seeing the results and how the union can truly affect people's lives.

Thank you for your service, Bob and Bo!



Bob Strelo, who served as President and business agent at Local 853 for 25 years, retired in March. Bob joined the Teamsters in 1975, when he worked as a warehouseman for Shaklee Foods. He became an organizer and business agent for Locals 78 and 856, and came to Local 853 as a business agent in 1992. Bob served as Chairman of Teamsters Benefit Trust Fund, and also of the Teamsters Assistance Program.

"Bob was a dedicated advocate of the members' rights and an excellent negotiator, bringing our members in the Dairy industry one of the finest contracts in the nation," says Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise. "Bob brought respect, integrity, and recognition to our local in his many years working for the members."



Bo Morgan, our Vice President, retired at the end of April. Bo came to our local after the merger of Local 291 into Local 853. He left a ready mix truck to work for the local as an organizer in 1998 and distinguished himself early on by organizing Right Away Redy Mix, which had been competing directly with our other organized companies. "As a business agent, Bo successfully negotiated some of the best contracts in the industries he worked with," says Aloise. "We're pleased

that Bo will continue to mentor our business agents and help when needed."

Local 853 staff serve as International Reps

The International Teamsters have recognized the talent of Local 853's staff by calling on them to also serve as International Reps. We should all be proud that our staff has developed expertise that can help Locals across the nation. Here's who's doing double duty:

- Rome Aloise - International Vice-President, Western Region
- Dennis Hart - Brewery and Soft Drink Conference
- Stu Helfer - Building and Construction Trades Division
- Lou Valletta - Bakery and Laundry Division

Upcoming events

TEAMSTER HORSEMEN

Chapter 7 West
1ST ANNUAL
BBQ COOK OFF
Bike & Car Show

To benefit the Childhood Leukemia Foundation

SATURDAY, JULY 8

(Starting at 10 a.m. and lasting all day)

SWISS PARK

5911 Mowry Ave., Newark

For cook-off registration or sponsorship info, contact Ray Torres: 661-903-2980 or rtorres@teamsters853.org

SAVE THE DATE:

Local 853 Member
Appreciation Day

Saturday, November 4
9:00 a.m.

John Muir Middle School
1444 Williams Street
San Leandro

*Hear the latest news
about the local and
win prizes. Everybody
leaves with cool gifts.*



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Local 853 - Celebrating 80 years

1937 -
 2017

Steward seminar emphasizes building power among our current members



*From left:
 Top: President Dennis Hart,
 IBT Trainer Sally Payne,
 Secretary-Treasurer Rome
 Aloise; Stewards work in
 three small groups; and a
 view of the whole group.*



On May 20, about 120 stewards came to the Oakland Hilton to learn about organizing and action, and how to build power among our current members.

The national threat to unions from Right-to-Work initiatives to a changing National Labor Relations Board that won't prioritize union or worker interests necessitates greater involvement from each and every member. And that means educating members about what the union does, how it works, and what having a union has gained for them. The local recognizes that for most members who weren't there for the organizing drive, their main experience of the union is paying dues.

Local 853 is initiating new member orientation. Current members are encouraged to talk with their shop stewards to learn how the union improved their working conditions.



CONNECTIONS

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Company stays local to stick with the Teamsters

Gillig and members cut ribbon to new facility in Livermore

These days, when a company announces that they're moving to Mexico, or China, or Texas, few people are surprised. When Gillig determined that they had outgrown their Hayward facility, several states made offers to get the company to relocate, and those offers contained lucrative tax breaks and benefits. Ultimately, however, the company decided to stay local. The reason: its productive and cohesive team of workers, all represented by Local 853, who built the company and keep it humming. On June 1, after 80 years in Hayward, the transit bus manufacturer cut the ribbon on its new Livermore facility.

Gillig, which now produces 1,800 buses a year, is the last wholly-owned and built-in-America bus manufacturer. The company was founded in San Francisco in 1890 by Jacob Gillig as a builder of horse-drawn carriages. It was destroyed in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, and reopened to manufacture car bodies, hearses, trucks and early model buses. By the 1970s, the plant was exclusively making school buses and would work nine months a year on manufacturing and spend the three months of summer on refurbishing and repairing school buses.

In December, 1976, then-organizer (and now Secretary-Treasurer) Rome Aloise won his largest union election to date when, by a margin of 170-10, the employees voted to join Local 853.

"Each department had its own seniority list and a person with 10 years could be laid off in one department while a new person could be working in another department. Foremen were allowed to hire and fire who they wanted," Aloise



Inset: (from left) Livermore Mayor John Marchand; Gillig President Derek Maunus; 51-year Gillig employee and Teamster member Stanley Alcon; and Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty cut the ribbon to open the new manufacturing facility in Livermore as workers participate in the grand opening celebration.

recalls. "After a 30 day strike, we won a 20% wage increase, the union health and welfare plan that, for the first time, covered the members and their families, establishment of plant-wide seniority, and foremen were made part of the bargaining unit so they could no longer do their own hiring and firing." Aloise adds that in the 40 year history of the contract, there's only been one strike that lasted one week. "This has clearly been a union success story," he says with pride.

At the ribbon cutting ceremony, company president Derek Maunus said that Gillig had many choices of where to relocate, but chose Livermore so as to maintain their current workforce, which has grown to more than 850 people. He also

recognized the Teamsters for their political help to obtain a number of variances and waivers so that Gillig could build their state-of-the-art facility right in our area.

The new 600,000-square-foot facility includes a 50,000-square-foot fabrication and assembly building and a 27,000-square-foot final bus prep facility.

"Over the years, the Teamsters have flexed our political muscle to get local transit agencies to buy Gillig buses," adds Aloise. "By working together to keep the company strong, we've been able to grow our membership." Today, Gillig members are the highest paid automotive manufacturing workers in the nation, exceeding the standard United Auto Workers agreement by \$5.00 per hour total package.

Local marks 80 years of growth and member strength

By ROME ALOISE

As we celebrate the 80th anniversary of Local 853, it is important to understand that we are not only celebrating the Local as an institution, but more importantly, we celebrate our membership and their loyalty and dedication to their union and to their sisters and brothers.

Local 853 has grown over the years from a small warehouse local that represented grocery and general warehousing, with some food production, to the largest local union in the Joint Council, and one of the most diverse, as it pertains to the types of work we cover, and our membership itself.

Our members work in many different industries, including dairy, liquor, warehousing, food manufacturing, beer, school bus, tech transit bus, para-transit bus, auto dealerships, food and restaurant supply, institutional food services, laundry, grocery clerks, big box clerks, parking, delivery drivers, ready mix, construction, parking, clerical, bus manufacturing, racing, county fairs and para-mutual betting parlors, public sector, and we've recently added the cannabis industry.

We strive to add new industries and new members because our local has a tradition and culture of organizing workers who are seeking to improve their lives and the lives of their families. This not only protects the work that we have under contract—your jobs—but also makes us bigger and stronger, thereby enabling us to have the economic ability to fight if we need to. The fact that our employers know that we are large and that we have the ability

to meet them on their same level forces employers to deal fairly with our demands.

Of course our various benefits also define the value and importance of being a Local 853 member. Our Local either chairs or has representatives on our two main health care benefit trust funds—Teamsters Benefit Trust and Teamsters Managed Trust. This gives us direct input

“Our purpose is to represent the members first, last and always and we have the tools to do the best job possible.”

to the benefit levels and costs that protect you and your families. We chair the SIP 401(k) Plan and have a trustee on the Western Conference of Teamsters Pension Trust Fund.

All of this happens because our local is respected and our leadership is recognized throughout the entire Teamsters Union. We have leadership positions on the Joint Council Executive Board and the International Executive Board, along with the State Federation of Labor and the University of California. The International IBT has recruited four of our staff to serve as International Representatives; this enables them not only to work for you, but also to assist other local unions around the country.

In short, we all belong to a great local union whose purpose is to represent the members first, last and always, and we have the tools,

recognition and respect to do the best job possible. We all need to be proud of what we have accomplished together!

One of the reasons our local has been so successful is due to our leadership. We continue to have officers and business agents who are educated, knowledgeable and dedicated to the membership.

Recently, two of our long-term and most dedicated officers have decided to retire.

Bob Strelor, President and business agent for a combined 25 years, retired at the end of March. An excellent negotiator, Bob brought respect, integrity, and recognition to our Local. We will miss him, but he surely deserves a long and healthy retirement.

Bo Morgan, who served as an organizer, business agent and Vice President for 19 years combined, retired at the end of April. Bo was tough on the employers and demanded that our members give a decent days work for a decent days pay, but he was respected by both. Bo will work with the local as a part-time consultant, mentoring our agents and assisting them with their duties.

While we lose two great leaders, our local has always prided itself on having good leadership waiting in the wings. So, welcome Dennis Hart as our new President and Lou Valletta as our new Vice President.

Celebrate your local and enjoy your summer months. Stay safe and healthy in this season of recreational activities.



Announcements

WCT Pension Plan Q&A

On the second Wednesday of every month, a representative from the WCT Pension Trust Fund comes to Local 853's Oakland office to answer your pension questions. Call 510-895-8853 or 800-400-1250 for an appointment.

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.

Charge your union dues

What's more convenient than paying your union dues with a credit card? For more information on getting set up, call the Local Union office at 510-895-8853.

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

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 union meetings

Local 853's membership meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the union hall: 7750 Pardee Lane, Oakland, CA, 94621.

Craig Schneider
Lithotype
10 years in Local 853



Challenge: Disgruntled people who don't know why they're disgruntled. Have to explain the positive things.

Reward: It's gratifying to help your co-workers and keep everyone on the same page and stay focused.

Jose Lopez
Cargill
6 years in Local 853



Challenge: Keeping the workforce motivated and loyal to the union.

Reward: Knowing that things are being done fairly.

Rosie Silva
Hallcon
1 year in Local 853



Challenge: Listening to the drivers' concerns when they feel they weren't treated fairly.

Reward: Getting the drivers what they need. My track record is 75% so far. It's rewarding to get the resolution in their favor.

Vince Nguyen
Ryder Transport
3 years in Local 853



Challenge: Trying to cater to both the employees and the manager and not getting on either's bad side.

Reward: You know what's going on and know your rights and can help other employees who don't know their rights.

First Transit dispatchers and supervisors join union

Dispatchers and supervisors at First Transit, Inc. in Redwood City ratified their first contract on May 11. This is the first of its kind for the Teamsters Union.

"Congratulations to all of our members who worked hard and fought for a strong contract at First Transit," said Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise. "These workers came together to fight hard for their rights, and their efforts are a great example of the work being done to improve conditions all across the passenger transportation industry."

The contract includes wage increases for the next three years, including a minimum increase of 6 percent in year one. It also includes holiday premium pay, and a 15-percent reduction in health and welfare costs for the workers.

"Any first contract is a challenge," said Business Agent Phil Ybarrolaza, who led the talks for the union. "In the end, we were able to put together a contract that improves things for everybody."

"If there's one thing I've taken away from the organizing and contract process, it's that you should know your worth, and no matter what, always live by your moral compass," said Lisa Abarr, a Customer Service Representative who served on the organizing committee and later the negotiating team. "Even if your views are unpopular or inconvenient, still stand by what you believe and never falter."

Abarr added that the process helped make her workplace more unified. "We all feel like there's more overall respect between management and employees."

First Teamster contract in cannabis industry

The first Teamster contract covering workers in the fast-growing cannabis industry was ratified in January. The 20 new members of Locals 853 and 63 work as drivers and warehouse workers at River Distributing Company, LLC, with sites in Santa Rosa, Sacramento and Los Angeles.

"These guys are so excited to be Teamsters because they're proud to be protected," says Business Agent Steve Beck. "They also enjoyed an immediate \$2/hour wage increase, a \$500 signing bonus, and to be part of the pension and 401K plan." Beck says that they'll start in the Teamsters Health and Welfare program in the next contract.

This company distributes medical marijuana, which has been legal for 20 years. When recreational marijuana becomes legal in January, 2018, the indus-

try is expected to skyrocket. The union is working to establish "labor peace" agreements with several other companies, which means that management will not wage massive anti-union campaigns and



will allow the employees to unionize once a majority sign union cards.

When prohibition ended and liquor was again legal in the U.S., the government wisely established what's known as a three-tier

system, ensuring that different entities were responsible for manufacturing, distribution and sales. This system ensured that taxes were paid correctly; it was also a useful system by which unions could divide jurisdictions. "Thanks to Rome's knowledge of the liquor industry, he's helped create a standard in the cannabis industry that will be invaluable," Beck adds. "We look forward to organizing thousands of workers in this industry."

Boston Coach drivers vote for union

By a solid majority, the 21 drivers at Boston Coach Chauffeurs voted on May 30 for Local 853 to represent them. These are "black car" limousine drivers that work major accounts, such as Genentech and the Ritz-Carlton. "These people drive Silicon Valley's wealthiest denizens and yet they were making \$9 or \$10/hour plus an unspecified gratuity,"

says Organizer Tracy Kelley, who adds that many of the drivers couldn't afford the health care and none had a retirement plan of any sort.

"This was a story of inequality," Kelley says. "I look forward to helping negotiate their first contract to start leveling the playing field."

Tech drivers meet to learn about their union



Joint Council 7 Political Director Doug Bloch explains to the shuttle drivers about how the Teamsters used political connections to support the union's organizing efforts in their industry.

Because so many tech shuttle drivers work split shifts, getting to a Thursday night union meeting is all but impossible for this newly organized group. Not to be discouraged, Local 853 is bringing the union to the drivers.

On February 11, Organizer Tracy Kelley held a Saturday seminar to give about 50 of the shuttle drivers a thorough union orientation, so that they know what their union does—on the

jobsite, for their benefits, and in the political arena.

In an effort to reach more of the drivers, Kelley is hosting regular barbecues at different hubs. “This meeting was a good start, but we have about 600 drivers under contract. We need to get them active in the union, so that they’ll fight for a good contract in 2018, and help us organize more shuttle companies,” Kelley adds.

A new relationship with Granite Rock

Negotiating a contract in years past with the previous owner of Granite Rock was a nightmare, reports Business Agent Jesse Casqueiro. “But, there’s been a 100% turnaround and the company is great to work with.”

For their most recent contract, the company agreed to sign on to the ACA

agreement and the members voted 29-1 to accept a four-year contract extension.

“We didn’t have to resort to strikes or job actions like we did in the past. It just shows how persistence can win and, if you’re on the right side of the argument, you can prevail.”

Fight with DBI finally over

Local 853’s members at DBI Beverage in San Jose ratified their new five-year agreement in April by a vote of 60-9.

By the end of the contract term, warehouse members will go from \$16 to \$28.75, drivers will go from \$22 to \$30, and the merchandisers’ journeyman rate will be \$22.50.

“Wages were important, but it wasn’t just about that,” says President Dennis Hart. “Warehouse workers were working 16-17 hours a day, and drivers also had long shifts. The members took a stand and now there are caps on mandatory overtime. This was a good contract.”

Help a Teamster brother in need...

Long-time Local 853 member Craig Deaton worked at SF Gravel for many years before the company closed. The union eventually got him placed on the ARB pipeline project in Daly City, which he really liked. He’d been working there over a month when, one day in May, a forklift backed over him. As a result of the accident, Craig lost a leg and has suffered other internal damage. In the past four weeks, he’s endured 38



Craig Deaton

surgeries and is recovering in the hospital. “He’s in great spirits,” says Business Agent Stu Helfer, but the accident was life-threatening and it will be a long recovery.”

A go-fund-me account was set up to help with expenses as Craig won’t be going back to work any time soon. To help your Teamster brother, go to: <https://www.gofundme.com/craig-allen-deaton>. A Trust fund is also being established.

Wilson Jackson
Avis/Budget Rental Car
19 years in Local 853



Challenge: It can be hard to take on management.

Reward: I like representing the workers in grievance matters and being a representative for them with the union.

Joe McDonough
City/County of San Francisco/
SFUSD
13 years in Local 853



Challenge: Trying to remind my supervisor of what my duties are and what his duties are.

Reward: To get positive change

and outcomes in contract negotiations. Helping out my fellow Teamsters with grievances and benefits.

Eddie Rojas
Costco Fairfield
5 years in Local 853



Challenge: Getting all the information from the employees and management and being able to settle it when it’s a heated situation, and resolve it in a

fast and nice manner.

Reward: Being there for the employees and making sure everything is right. Management wants to take advantage and I want to be there to help the employees out.