



Motion Picture & Theatrical Division

www.ht399.org

Teamsters Local 399 NewsReel

Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed

August 2010



NEW CONTRACT APPROVED BY 97%



**Message from the Secretary-Treasurer:
Looking Ahead – Leo Reed Page 2**

Message from the Secretary-Treasurer

Looking Ahead

By Leo T. Reed



Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed

It is my honor and pleasure to announce to the members of Local 399 that a new two-year contract has been successfully negotiated with the studios.

When we entered negotiations with the AMPTP we knew that most members of our local were behind the negotiating team. The AMPTP knew this also, and believe me when I tell you that they were terrified of a strike.

They realized that the Teamsters stand together, and that our members would have stood shoulder to shoulder no matter what happened. Our solidarity is one of the many reasons why we are the most respected union in the industry.

I also have to thank the brothers and sisters from the movie locals throughout the country who came to our side. Representatives from the major movie-making states,

as well as Canada and the IBT, lent their strength to our side of the bargaining table. Many of these people I have considered friends for years, and without them the negotiations would have been much more difficult.

Finally, I want to thank you members again. When the votes at our membership meeting were counted and 97.3% of you approved the new contract, I was sure that our long effort had been worth it.

Even though the contract has been successfully negotiated, we need to continue to show unity. The economy is still struggling and the movie industry, without decent incentives to compete against other states, still makes things difficult for us. It is time for all of us to put the Teamster strength behind those important issues.

Our local is working closely with FilmLA and other organiza-

tions to help keep productions in Hollywood. I urge all of you to show the same kind of passion for these important causes as you did for our new contract.

We also need to stand together with those Local 399 members not covered under the Black Book contract when their time comes. Location Managers, Casting Directors, Prop House Workers and Network Employees have stood behind you during these recent negotiations. Now it is your turn to stand behind them as we continue a united effort to keep Local 399 members successful in the industry.

Even though the contract has been successfully negotiated, we need to continue to show unity.

It is time for all of us to put the Teamster strength behind important issues.

OFFICE OF THE ELECTION SUPERVISOR
for the INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS
1801 K STREET, N.W., SUITE 421 L
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006
202-429-8683
877-317-2011 TOLL FREE
202-429-6809 FACSIMILE
electionsupervisor@ibtvote.org
www.ibtvote.org

Richard W. Mark
Election Supervisor

July 26, 2010

TO: All Members of Teamsters Local Union 399

FROM: Richard W. Mark, Election Supervisor

The IBT Election Supervisor has found that Local Union 399 violated the IBT Election Rules by using its publication, *NewsReel*, to support the candidacy of James P. Hoffa for election as General President of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

The Rules for the 2010-2011 IBT International Union Delegate and Officer Election (“Rules”) prohibit use of union publications to support or attack the candidacy of any person. Under this rule, a local union may not run photos or articles in its publication that promote or advertise that a member is running for International office or that other members support that candidacy. Local unions cannot take sides in any union election, or give one candidate campaign access to the membership unless it gives the same access to all candidates.

The May 2010 edition of *NewsReel* included photos of 3 members wearing campaign stickers with the logo of the Hoffa campaign. The publication of these photos in a union-financed publication improperly used union resources to promote the Hoffa candidacy and gave the improper impression that the local union supported that candidacy.

The Election Supervisor will not tolerate violation of the *Rules*. The Election Supervisor has ordered Local Union 399 not to provide support to any candidate for IBT office and to publish this notice in the August 2010 edition of *NewsReel* and on its website, www.ht399.com. To give the same advantage to other candidates for IBT General President that Local Union 399 gave to the Hoffa Campaign, the Election Supervisor has also ordered Local Union 399 to pay the costs of printing and mailing campaign literature to its members for all other candidates for IBT General President.

The Election Supervisor has issued this decision in *Halstead*, 2010 ESD 8 (July 26, 2010). You may read this decision at <http://www.ibtvote.org/protests/2010/2010esd008.htm>.

Any protest you have regarding your rights under the *Rules* or any conduct by any person or entity that violates the *Rules* should be filed with Richard W. Mark, 1801 K Street, N.W., Suite 421L, Washington, D.C. 20006, telephone: 877-317-2011, fax: 202-429-6809, email: electionsupervisor@ibtvote.org.

Studio Contract Overwhelmingly Ratified



A standing-room-only crowd of eager and enthusiastic Local 399 members overwhelmingly ratified the new two-year Studio Drivers contract during July's membership meeting.

Over 1,200 members packed the Pickwick Gardens meeting hall in Burbank to learn the outcome of Secretary-Treasurer Leo Reed's long and grueling negotiations with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP). In the end, 97.3% of the members present took the Local's advice and voted to accept the new contract, avoiding a strike that could have crippled the industry and left drivers out of work indefinitely.

A Determined Spokesman

Reed was the spokesman and chief negotiator during marathon talks, which began on June 14. The initial sessions continued for two weeks and further talks took place until the eve of the ratification meeting.

Representatives of the six major studios, their attorneys and staffs joined AMPTP negotiators in eyeball-to-eyeball talks with Reed and his negotiating team. Reed made his intentions clear at the opening session, noting that he would settle for nothing less than a quality contract. Raises and maintenance of medical benefits were a must, he told

them, and takeaways would not be tolerated.

A 14-hour session, which began Friday morning, showed little promise, and Reed told the producers he would not recommend their offer and he would recommend a strike. However, after a phone conference Saturday afternoon, the prospects for settlement improved.

"I am going to recommend the contract because it is the best that we can get without a strike, and I believe it is the best we could get even with a strike," Reed told his members.

"The final offer is not bad," he continued. "No concessions, no rollbacks and we are moving forward." He said it wasn't perfect – he wanted three percent, but it is still great. "It's easy to negotiate a strike," he emphasized. "It's tough to negotiate a contract. We negotiated a contract successfully." His remarks were greeted with rounds of applause, and a definite show of relief erupted from the crowd.



Steve Share, Royale Edward, Alan Tunstall, Ron Windred, Bill Peck and John Kemmler

2-Year Agreement Wins 97.3% Vote

Contract Length and Medical Benefits

One of the most important aspects of the new contract is its length: two years instead of the three as in previous contracts. This means that the Teamsters contract will expire at the same time as that of IATSE, which will increase the union's power during the next round of negotiations. "We will have a lot of leverage when we go back to contract talks within 18 months, along with IATSE and Location Managers," explained Local 399 Legal Counsel Joseph Kaplon.

"IATSE President Matthew Loeb has helped bring our two unions closer together," said Reed, in reference to the newest IATSE national president, who took over in 2008. "The Teamsters will now be sitting side by side with the IA at the bargaining table. That is where we belong."

"In these tough economic times we feel positive about the gains we made with health care benefits and pensions," stated Reed. "Not only did we avoid any contract takeaways, we actually increased the hourly contributions by producers towards our members' health plans by 50 cents per year. On top of that our retirees will now receive 13th and 14th pension checks."

Press reports

In the days before the meeting a strike seemed imminent, with local newspapers and industry magazines reporting that a compromise looked unlikely. The key issue of disagreement was annual raises for the 3,200 Teamster drivers:

the union wanted 3%, while the studios were holding firm at 2%.

In the end, a strike was averted by a compromise. The union agreed to an annual raise for its members of 2%, while the studio offered significant sweeteners to stop the potential strike.

Additional Improvements

Other improvements to the contract include language that guarantees Teamster members receive their full wages on any movie over an \$8 million budget (the IATSE and Guild receive low-budget wages until \$12 million); a Teamster Captain must be present on all productions in the 13 Western States; no new-media agreement that would have capped salaries below what can be achieved through organizing; and the removal of CORE.

"When you take these achievements into account," added Reed, "we feel you have no choice but to ratify this contract." The long line leading to the ballot boxes and the final tally showed that the members wholeheartedly agreed to accept this contract.

Teamsters International Representative Ron Schwab, who attended negotiations, introduced the Teamster dignitaries who were present. Joint Council President and International Vice President Randy

Cammack, International VP Rick Middleton, and members of the Motion Picture and Theatrical Trade Division from throughout the nation, all received hearty rounds of applause. "To have everyone sitting at this table," Schwab said, "shows how united the Teamsters Motion Picture Division is."

Schwab noted that Reed successfully negotiated the last seven studio contracts. "The experience of five successive rounds of negotiations served Leo Reed's team well," he noted. "He has a wealth of insight into the issues our members regard as vital in this industry."



Location Manager Classes Offered



Wally Uchida, Brittany Petros, Kristin Dewey, Billy Fox, Greg Lazzaro, Miles Henley, Deven Chierighino, Osceola Refetoff, Evan Peller, Howard Harnett, Larry Pearson, Tada Chae, Javier Robles and Danny Wilson

Location managers who are looking to learn new strategies or get up to speed on new technologies related to their field now have a great opportunity.

The Local 399 education committee, led by Tim Hillman, has been offering free classes for interested members. Subjects covered during the Location Workshops include how to negotiate a contract, business ethics, digital photography and software tutorials, and tours of great shooting locations in Los Angeles.

“This is a great opportunity for Local 399 location managers,” said Business Agent Ed Duffy. He stressed that the workshops are meant for members at all stages of their careers. “People just getting into the industry can really benefit from these classes,” he added. “For those who have been doing this a long time, it’s a great way to learn new technology and other ways to get the job done.”

The Location Workshops are free and held in

the Union Classroom at Local 399’s office. For more information on upcoming classes, please call your Local 399 office at (818) 985-7374

The upcoming classes include:

Sat. – August 21st – COMPUTER BUDGETING
– REVISED

Sat. – September 18th – CONTRACTS &
INSURANCE BASICS

Sat. – October 16th – TECHNOLOGY: THE 10
BEST GADGETS & SIMPLE PROGRAMS,
AND HOW TO USE THEM

Sat. – November 13th - ARCHITECTURAL
STYLES FOR LOCATION PROFESSIONALS
& INTRO TO L. A. LANDSCAPING

Omega Keeps Teamsters Working



Office Staff: Roberta Viera, Lenya Pollette, Cindy Gold, Craig Tamber and Tiffani Thompson

Despite a destructive structure fire that wiped out an entire warehouse, Teamster Local 399 members at Omega Cinema Props are continuing to work.

In late July, one of Omega's four warehouses caught fire and almost burned to the ground. The building, named C.P. Three, contained the Wild West, marine, and automotive props, among others. With almost all of

the stock lost in the blaze and a long cleanup and restoration process ahead, it was feared that the employees at C.P. Three would be laid off.

Omega, one of the largest prop houses in Hollywood, employs about 60 Teamster members. Working in the office taking calls, in the warehouse pulling orders and preparing them for shipping, repairing broken props, and even driving deliveries to the set, these

Teamsters have their hands in every aspect of the shop.

"Our members help to keep this place running," said Shop Steward and shipping foreman Valente Lamas, an Omega employee for 23 years. "The company has four different warehouses, and each one depends on our members to operate. It was a shock to all of us when we heard that one of them was on fire."

Despite the loss, Lamas was happy to report that no union members from C.P. Three had been let go. "Our members have a lot of knowledge and experience in this field," he explained. "Management realized how valuable they are, and that they have the backing of the Teamsters, and knew they couldn't be let go."

Management was equally as happy about avoiding layoffs, and also optimistic about the future. "We are going to get everything back. This is our business, and we are in it for the long haul," said General Manager Barry Pitchard. "We are staying flexible, moving people around to other warehouses so we can keep them working."

Local 399 President Tony Cousimano, who represents the members

Continued on page 8



CP One: Miguel Martinez, Guillermo Lopez and Herbert Gonzalez (sitting) Alfredo Macias, Hector Martinez, Don Neil, Rafael Gonzalez, Chris Anderson, Nolan Wyatt, Santiago Castillo and Shop Steward Valente Lamas



Shop Steward Valente Lamas and President Tony Cousimano



TEAMSTERS LOCAL 399

Studio Transportation Drivers
4747 Vineland Avenue, Suite E
North Hollywood, CA 91602

FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Los Angeles, CA
Permit No. 34694

PRE-SORT FIRST CLASS

Visit Your Union Web Site:
www.ht399.org



Omega

Continued from page 7

at Omega, praised both workers and management for their flexibility during the crisis. "Valente does a great job as steward," stated Cousimano. "He and management work very well together whenever there is an issue, and I think the way both sides have kept our members from C.P. Three working is a testament to that."



CP Two: Edgar Vasquez, Victor Molina, Oscar Melendez, Janet Rivas,
TJ Scott and Aaron Hemstock



PC Four: Tess Ong, Alex McKail, Herbert Duran, Humberto Acuña, Ernest Cook, Jorge Balcaceres
and Shop Steward Valente Lamas

• For additional photos visit
www.ht399.org and visit Gallery.