



Teamsters Local 399

NewsReel

Motion Picture & Theatrical Division

www.ht399.org

Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed

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Message from the Secretary-Treasurer

By Leo T. Reed

Pension, Health and Welfare Plans

The cost of health care benefits has become one of the most important issues facing our members. Costs of care and insurance coverage have been going up at an alarming rate for the last decade or more. Indications are that costs will rise an average of nine to ten percent a year for the next five years.

The Motion Picture Industry Pension and Health trust—the administrator of your benefits package—paid approximately \$500 million in health care costs last year for actives and retirees. If the projections are accurate, next year's costs for just health care will increase by approximately \$50 million! The \$50 million more a year is just to stay even. There are also the increase pension cost, and the reduced reserves caused by the 2008 market crash.

'What Can Be Done' will be the only topic at a special Town Hall Meeting regarding the status of the Pension, Health and Welfare Plans. It is scheduled for 8 am on Sunday, January 22, 2012 at Pickwick Gardens, located at 1001 Riverside Dr. in Burbank. The IA has already scheduled a meeting at an earlier date. However, we feel that the closer we schedule our meeting to negotiations, the more accurate the

numbers will be for both health care and pension costs. Please check our website www.ht399.org for more details.

While we are on this very important subject, I would like to explain why we are in this situation and what you can do about it. Because of space limitation we will cover just health care issues for now.

Health care costs have increased at a faster rate than anyone was able to predict. All over the country, people have seen rising costs for medical services, doctor visits, tests, prescription drugs and hospital care.

Why is this happening?

First, costs in the medical, dental, vision care and prescription areas have been going up every year, and they are still rising. When costs go up, the insurance premiums rise. Second, the industry's population is aging and the older we are, the more health benefits we use. With older age comes the need for some of the medical services that cost so much, especially in the form of tests and treatments that younger people do not face.

There is no doubt that medical costs increase for all ages in the workforce. This must be accepted and must be a part of the negotiated benefits in the contract. No industry is going to throw away the experience and skill of its workers. They must have solid benefits as part of the unity of organized labor.

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Part of the blame for rising insurance costs is due to escalating costs for medical care, pharmaceuticals, and other health care expenses. A new mandate in the federal health care overhaul is also a factor in making insurance more expensive, by allowing adult children to remain on their parents' insurance policies until age 26.

Keeping Costs Down

Your cooperation is necessary in order to control costs and preserve your benefits. In January 2011, anticipating the challenges to health care coverage, I devoted my message to the important subject of using your benefits wisely. I reminded you that the rising health care costs won't diminish anytime soon — and while each of us can't stop these increases, we can work together to protect our benefits.

Using these benefits wisely is the responsibility of each member. You must do your part to help preserve your benefits in the future. By working together and being diligent in our cost-saving efforts, we can help safeguard and protect one of the most important benefits you and your covered dependents have come to count on — your health care coverage.

Take Charge of Your Health

Remember what you have been hearing in the media and from others: you can make lifestyle changes now to help you feel better and avoid preventable diseases like high blood pressure and heart problems, diabetes and circulatory problems. It may be as simple as losing weight, getting more exercise, or quitting smoking. These goals can be reached through wellness programs and following guidelines from your physician. Change comes slowly, but the improvements are well worth the effort on your part.

Stay Within Your Network

You can save out-of-pocket expenses and help keep plan costs down by staying within your network. You may use preferred or non-preferred providers, but your out-of-pocket costs will be much higher if you use non-preferred providers.

Understand Your Coverage

Understanding what is, and what is not, covered under your health insurance can save you both money and frustration when you are trying to schedule necessary medical procedures. Your plan administration staff members are willing to explain your coverage and they welcome your calls. They are there to serve you.

Avoid Expensive Emergency Room Visits

In a true emergency, the best action you can take is to call 911 immediately or go to the nearest medical facility. However, for non-emergency treatment, it is most important to call your primary care physician first. Emergency Room visits are extremely expensive. Avoiding them whenever possible can save you significant out-of-pocket expenses.

We at Local 399 are committed to helping members stay healthy and keeping costs down, so that we can preserve your quality health care benefits in the future. We hope you will understand and follow these suggestions.

**... there is no doubt that
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ages in the workforce...**

Your Local Cares About You

You can be sure that Local 399 has your back when it comes to quality benefits and maintenance of the excellent health care coverage you have. We are together in this, and make no mistake, we are committed to working out a successful solution to deal with rising costs.

We fully appreciate your support and want you to come to the Town Hall Meeting in January 2012.
Thank you for your solidarity.

**A special Town Hall Meeting
regarding the status of the
Pension, Health and Welfare Plans
Sunday, January 22, 2012 at 8 am
Pickwick Gardens
1001 Riverside Dr. in Burbank.**

**Please check our website
www.ht399.org for more details.**

Casting Directors Celebrate New Contract Following Members' Approval

Following successful negotiations, Casting Directors from New York and Los Angeles voted overwhelmingly in favor of ratifying an agreement with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP). Business Agent Steve Dayan stated to members: "We made gains in pension and health benefits which are so critically important today."

The fourteen-member negotiating committee worked diligently to increase pay for associates, and protect and improve health and retirement benefits. Effective October 2nd, 2011, the new provisions of the contract include additional contributions to members pension funds as well as increases in health benefit contributions to keep current with those ever rising costs of health care.

During the meeting with Casting Directors in Los Angeles on September 15, steering committee member Margie Simkin praised the negotiating team, stating: "You guys did a phenomenal job keeping our benefits intact."

The ratified agreement is effective from October 2, 2011 – October 1, 2012. The contract covers one year because negotiations with Teamsters, IATSE and the producers are scheduled for spring 2012. "This is actually a good thing, because it gives us a chance to come back and renegotiate and continue to make gains for Associates in particular," said Dayan.

"Next spring the most critical challenges union members will face are the soaring cost of health care and protection of pensions. This is of utmost concern for us as we negotiate for our members," said Local 399 Business Agent Ed Duffy.

When unions across the country are struggling to maintain benefits for their members, Local 399 Casting Directors have seen substantial gains. These are all well deserved, because the first six months of 2011 saw the 400 Teamster Casting Directors contributing more than 498,000 hours to the Motion Picture Pension and Health Plans, totaling \$2,234,775.

"The gains we have made with the union in our corner have been invaluable," said Simkin. "Five years ago, we didn't even have health benefits or a pension."



Gary Zuckerbrod



Left to right Ed Duffy, Allen Hooper, Charley Medigovich, Steve Dayan and Joe Wisniewski

Around Universal...



Parenthood: Coordinator Jay Smith, Jimmie Turner, Don Haggerty, Bruce Souther, Alan Stepp, Nona Mason, Delbert Clough, John Dixon, Captain Rick Kelleher, and David Haggerty.



Dispatch: Yard Boss Scotty Fair, Eva Vazquez, Adam Fox, and Julie Sanders.



CSI: Eddie Lee Voelker, Dan Briggs, Tony Riedel, and D.B. Wilson

COLA Awards

The 17th annual California On-Location Awards (COLA) honored Location Managers, Commercial Scout Managers, Assistant Location Managers and Location Teams for their professional excellence. Held at the Millennium Biltmore in Downtown Los Angeles, the show was hosted by producers Bill MacDonald and Marcus Morton. Amy Lemisch of the California Film Commission presented the Public Employee Awards. Among the 399 winners were:



**Location Professional of the Year,
Commercials**

Louis de Fontanes – “Jim Beam”



**Location Professional of the Year,
Independent Feature Film**

Caleb Duffy – “The Artist”



**Honorary
Member**



**Location Professional of the
Year, TV Episodic**

Nancy Haecker – “House M.D.”



Movie Bosses
Mike Soleau



**Location Professional of the Year,
Studio Feature Film**
S. Todd Christensen – “Moneyball”



Location Team of the Year, TV Episodic
“THE EVENT”

Open 4 Business Productions LLC/NBC Universal
Location Managers - Chris Campbell, Wes Hagan;
Key Assistant Location Managers — Joe Akerman, Casey
Boynton, Miles Henley, Brandon Thomas, Brett Williams;
Assistant Location Manager Amil Fuentes and Lauren Willeboer

Local 399 Mourns Member Jack Howard Lietzke, 1933-2011

Jack Howard Lietzke passed away peacefully in the early morning hours of August 3, 2011, at his home in Los Angeles, Ca.

He was born April 18, 1933 in Wichita, Kansas, the only child of Pete and Peggy Lietzke, and came west when his father drove for the entertainment industry.

After service in the US Navy, Jack enjoyed a long and rewarding career as a Teamster Driver, Transportation Coordinator and business owner. He worked with such notables as Walt Disney, Jack Warner, Audrey Hepburn, Admiral William Halsey and director William Wyler.

Jack honed his skills on countless shows, from "Gunsmoke" and "Bonanza" to coordinating several Neil Simon movies and television series. He handled transportation work on the John Wayne feature "The Cowboys" and in the twilight of his career, he coordinated several Joel Silver projects that included films in the "Lethal Weapon" and "Die Hard" series.

Given the endearing nickname "Captain Jack," he will be fondly remembered as a wonderful storyteller, sharing many of his experiences in the motion picture industry. Jack was a mentor to many and helped inspire people in the trade that he so loved.

Jack Howard Lietzke is survived by his wife LuJuan, his son Craig, daughter-in-law Judy, daughter Nicole, and grandchildren Brett and Ryan.



Local 399 Mourns Member Lou Leucart, 1936-2011

Lou Leucart, member of Local 399 since 1976, passed away peacefully on May 27, 2011. He was born on September 8, 1936.

Lou enjoyed an extensive career as a Driver, Transportation Captain,

and Coordinator on many features and TV productions.

He loved motorcycles, boating, and racing. He also performed many truck stunts because of his driving skills. Lou was a member of the WRA and raced competitively with his best friend, Ray Swann.

A loving husband, father, grandfather and friend, Lou will always be remembered for his sense of humor and his infectious laugh. Lou is survived by his wife Maureen, his daughters Denise, Peggy and RaeLynn, sons Danny and Tom, and 12 grandchildren.



Commercial Productions

Commercial production is an important part of Local 399's mission to protect union jobs and provide opportunities for its members. Business Agents and organizers have been vigilant and now

have 270 commercial production companies under union contract. In addition to providing work, last year's commercial activity — by the Teamsters and IA — generated almost \$5 million in con-

tributions to the Motion Picture Industry Pension and Health Plan. Local 399 BA Shanda Laurent and a photographer recently visited three commercial sites to visit with members on the job.

Curious Pictures – working on a commercial for a car loan company



Joe Baker-Gang Boss



Matt Prisk-Location Manager



Arcel Balderas- Caterer



Miguel Navarrete



Tomas Magana



Rudy Martinez

MJZ Production: An Almond Joy commercial shot in Universal City



Randy Wolff



JJ Gonzalez



Frederick Dargenton

MJZ Production:



Randy Wolff, Stephen Chatelain, JJ Gonzalez

Phillips Commercial at Encino Country Club



Alan Pancratz



Anton Sohn



Chris Ter-Saakyan
K-G Catering



Deano Peluso



Jason Lems



Mark "WOODY" Young



Reed Randoy



The status of the Pension, Health and Welfare Plans

A special Town Hall Meeting

Representatives from the Motion Picture Industry
Pension and Health Plans will be present.

Sunday, January 22, 2012

at 8 am

**Pickwick Gardens
1001 Riverside Dr. in Burbank.**

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for more details.**



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Successful Local 399 Lobbying Effort Helps Extend Tax Credit

Local 399 has been working hard with an indecisive state government to bring an extension of the current tax credit program and keep productions in California. It has been a decade-long battle first begun by Motion Picture Division Director Leo T. Reed in the 1990's.

Ed Duffy, Business Agent for Local 399, has made several trips to Sacramento and understands the situation fully. He diligently works to keep members informed through regular emails and news briefs. "I want to thank all members who called their Senators and Assembly representatives encouraging them to support the bill. On October 9th Governor Brown signed the extension so that we can have some comfort in knowing we have two more years of tax credits. Then in January we will be back fighting for more."

The film and TV tax program distributes \$500 million in tax credits - spread over five years - as an incentive to keep filmmakers in California. But, as important the film tax program is to hundreds of thousands of people affected by runaway production, certain state legislators had been reluctant to extend the tax credits with the current budgetary problems.

For several months both the State Assembly and

the Senate have demonstrated tremendous fluctuation of first support, then opposition, to the proposed extension of the Film Tax Bill AB 1069. Introduced by Assembly member Felipe Fuentes, the bill to extend the current film and TV tax credits, represents a solid means of discouraging runaway production, as film companies have fled California to more tax and incentive friendly states such as New York, Georgia, and Louisiana.

In his lobbying effort, Duffy has spent months following the rollercoaster of support and confusion over the bill. Speaking about September's legislative session, Duffy said, "In 24 hours we went from being attached to the Governor's job bill with a five year extension, to a three year extension with budget triggers, to a one year extension with no budgetary triggers attached."

According to statistics, the 2009 tax credit program has brought over 115 projects back to California and over 2.2 billion dollars in production spending, saving thousands of jobs for members. The extension will continue the current \$100 million a year in film tax credits past the 2013 sunset date and add an additional one year and \$100 million in 2014/15.