



Motion Picture & Theatrical Division

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Teamsters Local 399 NewsReel

Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed

July 2009



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Message from the Secretary-Treasurer

By Leo T. Reed



Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed

On July 14th and 15th, 2009, the Teamsters' International Motion Picture Policy Committee met in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Present were: our General President's Executive Administrative Assistant, Ed Keyser, the International's attorney, Rick Gibson, the Head of the Ethical Practice Committee, Tom Schatz, two International Vice Presidents, two Joint Council Presidents, and the Heads of the Locals from Hollywood; Boston; Philadelphia; Detroit; New Mexico; Hawaii; South Carolina; Austin, Texas; Dallas; Chicago; New York; and Atlanta. Also present were four of our Business Agents, our Office Manager and the Local's attorney.

The objective of this meeting was to complete the proposals for our National Agreement, the Teamsters Motion Picture Industry Standard.

You should know by now why we must have a National Agreement.

It is all positive — definitely no negatives.

There is an old saying, "An injury to one is an injury to all!"

To succeed we need total

commitment to each other — to come to each other's aid when called — to have more leverage and clout in negotiations, particularly when we negotiate for wages and benefits.

We need each other more than ever before. The Writers and Actors just got their butts kicked because the Companies know that with the exception of the Teamsters, there is no trade unionism in Hollywood.

The Teamster Locals, nationwide, are committed, and it is my job as Director of this Division to make sure they remain that way.

On July 14, 2009 in Albuquerque, I gave a short speech to the Policy Committee and my opening remarks were:

"We are almost there: the Teamsters Motion Picture Industry Standard. Except for hiring procedures, and

Producers will no longer be able to play one local against another and have one local negotiate significant reductions to get the job. Rates will be uniform and producers will have to make their decisions on the most favorable rate.

referral systems, we should be able to finish the rest of the proposed language of this National Agreement.

"We realize that sometimes it's hard to break old habits. A few Locals are having a hard time changing their referral systems. So our attorney will go over some of the dos and don'ts. The final decision will be made by each Local, and then they will be individually responsible for their system."

We must move forward. We can't wait.

It is clearly in the interest of all movie locals to support this effort. Producers will no longer be able to play one local against another and have one local negotiate significant reductions to get the job. Rates will be uniform and producers will have to make their decisions on the most favorable location, and not the most favorable rate. Teamster leaders will also have significant strength in their negotiations. By supporting the National Agreement, they will have the entire Teamster organization behind them.

By now the Studios must have

Teamsters' leaders will also have significant strength in their negotiations. By supporting the National Agreement, they will have the entire Teamster organization behind them.

gotten the message that we are together and COMMITTED to each other, even though the other Unions and Guilds in this business are not.

Recently, as you all know, the Writers and the Screen Actors Guilds got their butts kicked in negotiations. With the exception of the Teamsters, trade unionism does not exist in Hollywood. Never did, never will. The Writers, the Screen Actors' Guild, and the IATSE will hold rallies, and say, "We are mad as hell and we won't take this anymore!" then they will **always** cross each others' picket lines. They have been doing it for half a century. The Producers are well aware of this, and they definitely know what to do. Their victories over the Writers and SAG are well documented. By the way, the Studios never had to go after their company Union, the IATSE, because they are more management than management.

When we come up, we don't have to put up with that "bullshit" because the Studios know that as long as we are COMMITTED and stay together, it will be very difficult to take us on. There will be no need for strikes and picket lines, just the threat. We can get decent contracts as long as we are together.

However, remember, times have changed. The world has changed. Competition is now global. We

have to change and the only way to do this is to remember that it is our responsibility and duty to stay COMMITTED. I will continue using that word, "COMMITTED." Don't let them separate us. No matter what! In negotiations, the race is on! They are now using expensive high tech, union busting, corporate lawyers, and CPAs. Yes, the race is definitely on, and we have to start running. Yes, start running! I used this same analogy in the Joint Council 42 paper: "Start running!"

Thomas L. Friedman says it best in his book, "The World is Flat."

With a little humor, he quotes an old African proverb:

Every morning as the sun rises in Africa, a gazelle wakes up. It knows it must run faster than the fastest lion or it will be killed. Everyone morning a lion

"It doesn't matter whether you are a lion or a gazelle. When the sun comes up, you better start running."

— African proverb

wakes up. It knows it must outrun the slowest gazelle or it will starve to death. It doesn't matter whether you are a lion or a gazelle. When the sun comes up, you better start running.

With a little humor and a lot of seriousness, I would like to say, "Well, the sun has come up in the Motion Picture Industry, and we better start running." Total COMMITMENT! If we don't, like the gazelle and lion,

like the Writers' and SAG, we will be in deep sh*t! Satchel Page says, "And don't look back, because someone may be gaining on your ass."

The Studios are geared up to take on every Union to make up for losses on their failed outside business ventures. You see, our industry is almost recession-free. Almost, because although the movie making business continues to be successful, the Studios lost money on their outside ventures, and they need to make it up.

Let's not have them making it up on us, and they won't, as long as we stay COMMITTED. The end result of this meeting was total COMMITMENT! So when we go into negotiations next year, the Union leaders from Boston, New York, Chicago, Michigan, the Carolinas, Miami, Louisiana, Georgia, Texas, and New Mexico will be sitting next to us! As the Director of the Motion Picture Division, with approval from our General President, I will be chairing the negotiations on the Union side. With all the economic problems that the rest of the world has, I believe that we will still be able to get a decent contract.

I also want to make this clear, grouping is here to stay, and the right to follow our equipment will always be preserved.

It took us over 20 years to get everyone on board, together. As long as I'm the Director of the Division, I will promise you that.

Easy A Crew Makes the Grade in Ojai, California



Captain Jim Andrews

Transportation Captain Jim Andrews arrives on location before the rest of his 20-plus person crew. “My job is to facilitate production,” explained the 20-year Teamster and captain from Ojai, California.

Easy A is a Sony Screen Gems feature film that follows a small-town high school student’s attempts to become popular. As captain, Andrews ensures that the production’s daily transportation needs are met: the talent is picked up and delivered, and the crew, picture cars and equipment are all where they need to be. Local 399 crew members drive shuttle vans and honey wagons, stake-beds to haul the equipment, production vans and generator trucks.

“It’s been a fun job in a nice, small town that has been really welcoming and cooperative,”

community,” agreed Location Manager Fermin Davalos, who has worked in production for more than two decades and has been a Teamster for 10 years. “The people here have been very helpful.”

In preparation for the filming, Nordhoff High School officials rescheduled summer school. The company gave

the campus a make-over, hired local kids for background work, and brought an influx of money into the town, Davalos was happy to report.

“We’ve had a positive impact on the town,” he added. “And we’re very fortunate to have a great crew, so the work has gone well.”

“It’s a good crew and we’re happy to be busy,” agreed Sony Transportation Coordinator Dan Brizendine, who has been a Teamster for 37 years and has

**“Hard work
pays off in this
industry.”**

—Transportation Captain Jim Andrews

Andrews said of Ojai and its Nordhoff High School.

“This is an extraordinary



Deborah Farris



Location Manager Fermin Davalos

worked on Screen Gems projects for the last four years. “These folks make it feel a little bit like old Hollywood, and that makes our jobs easier.”

“And Jim Andrews is a hard worker — so things are bound to go smoothly,” he added.

“Keeping your nose to the grindstone pays off in this industry,” said Andrews, whose motto is “work hard, even when you think no one is watching.”

At the beginning of his career, Andrews drove forklifts at the Warner Brothers Ranch, sweepers on the main lot, and “did all the dirty jobs that no one else wanted

to do.” But the regularity of the schedule allowed him to spend time with his family. “I ate dinner with my kids and coached their sports teams. It was a luxury in this business, and one that I will always be grateful for.”

Now that his kids are older, Andrews is taking advantage of new opportunities. “I really enjoy the hustle and bustle that comes with production.” Andrews credits his fellow Local 399 members and Screen Gems employees Dan Brizendine and Jayson Ehlers with his current role on *Easy A*.

“I’m so thankful for the opportunities that Local 399,

Screen Gems, Dan and Jason have made available to me. I can see the hard work that Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed and his staff put in on behalf of the members and it inspires me to work even harder.”

Cover photo:

From left to right: Dave Torgerson, Wade Wells, John Follingstad, John Burke, Jr., Jeff Rambolet, Randy Cantor, Deborah Farris, Myles Kimura, Neil Chisholm, Evan Sklou, Ron Hooker, Heriberto Gonzales, Captain Jim Andrews. Not shown are: Evett Peterson, JD Yarbrough, Ken Williams, Kevin Linstrom.

Former Local 399 Member Now Provides Medical Care to Teamsters



As a medical provider with the Motion Picture Health Plan, Dr. Jeffrey Korcheck, an orthopedic surgeon, sees many patients who work in the industry. When reviewing a patient's chart record he proudly informs them that he used to be a studio driver and Hollywood Teamster.

"More than one Local 399 member has responded to that news with 'Gimme a break, Doc!' Dr. Korcheck said with a smile. "But it's true. I tell them that I wouldn't be where I am today without the miles behind the wheel as a Hollywood Teamster."

Dr. Korcheck was saving for the future expense of medical school in the 1970's and needed a steady job. His lifelong friend was the son

of Nate Dorfman and nephew of Local 399's Secretary-Treasurer Izzy Dorfman at the time. He suggested that he become a studio driver.

Dr. Korcheck, born and raised in Hollywood-LA, knew the area well and eventually drove for a number of studios. He worked on some of the most popular television shows of the time. On *Happy Days* he handled the smaller transportation needs, including taking care of the Fonz's motorcycle.

"It was often fun and it was always good, honest work. I was fortunate that I never had to sell apples on the corner to make a

living, like my father did during the Depression. I'll always be grateful to the Teamsters. Without the steady work I would not have been able to pay for medical school at the time and lessen my financial burden."

Dr. Korcheck's areas of expertise include sports injuries, joint replacement/reconstruction and fracture management of the musculoskeletal system.

"When a Local 399 member comes through the door, my job is to get them back to work. Sometimes surgery is necessary and because the Teamsters have such great medical coverage, we can provide them with the excellent care they deserve."

It's been a few years since Dr.

Korcheck can claim to be an active member of Local 399, but he recognizes the Teamsters that come into his office. He concluded "they are the same hardworking, dedicated union members who impressed me when I was a young man. I am proud to serve the community that brought my parents together and supported me as a young man. I enjoy going to work each day and I am thrilled when my education and training allows me to help out a Hollywood Teamster".



Former Local 399 member Dr. Jeffrey Korcheck examines the torn ligament of current member Jerry Roberg.

Tips for Preserving Your Benefits

Your job-based medical coverage is vital to the health and well-being of you and your family. That's why it is essential for every member to use their benefits correctly in order to control spending. Moreover, by being an informed health care consumer you can get the full benefit of your coverage while saving out-of-pocket expenses!

Your First Line of Defense

If you are not feeling well, your first line of defense is to contact your health care provider. This is another reason why all members are highly encouraged to have a primary care physician.



Pricey ER Visits

In a true emergency, do not hesitate to call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room! However, for non-threatening injuries and ailments, members are urged to call their doctor's office. Many physicians, and especially medical clinics, have evening and Saturday hours.



Staying Within Your Network

One of the best ways you can save money is to stay within your network of providers. In order to get the lowest possible rate for a service, test or procedure, your plan has contracted with medical professionals and facilities and has a pre-agreed charge for those services. When members do not utilize the services of these contracted providers, it costs both the plan – and the member – a great deal more money.

Be sure to check with your plan and utilize the services of pre-authorized, contracted medical professionals and facilities.

Prescription Drugs



Members can save money on prescription drugs by requesting an equivalent generic version. Additionally, medications you take on a regular basis may be available through the mail at a discounted rate.

Taking Charge of Your Health

Making positive lifestyle changes can have a huge benefit for your overall health. Do you need to lose some weight or quit smoking? The time has never been more important for you to take good care of yourself.

Your health care plan offers a variety of health and wellness programs that can help you reach your goals.





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Obituary – Johnie A. Dias

Johnie A. Dias, a retired mechanic at Metro Goldwyn Mayer Movie Studio, passed away March 19 at the age of 87. Dias enjoyed the reputation of a mechanic with unbelievable ability and talent who could fix anything. He worked on such movies as *How the West was Won*, *North by Northwest*, and *Viva Las Vegas*. A United States Navy veteran, he was a Local 399 member from 1959 to 1983.

He is survived by his wife Marjorie, son Tom, daughter Sheri, five grandchildren and four great grandchildren.
