



Motion Picture & Theatrical Division

www.ht399.org

Teamsters Local 399 NewsReel

Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed

May 2010



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Message from the Secretary-Treasurer

Medical Benefits Your Highest Priority

By Leo T. Reed



Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed

Last month we sent out a questionnaire to all members covered under the “Black Book” contract – the three-year agreement with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) – that is due to expire on July 31, 2010.

We asked you to rate your priorities! It was no surprise that maintaining your pensions and medical benefits was your number one concern. Out of more than 1,033 responses, 961 of you passed over the wage increase box and made benefits your highest priority. The second, to no one’s surprise, was wage increases.

We understand your requests. Medical costs have been going up at an alarming rate. In 1980 health care was under 9 percent of the gross national product. Every year since then it has risen, until today health care consumes 18 percent of our gross national product. In 1980 the average monthly cost of health insurance

premiums was around \$500. Today it is more than \$1,200 per month for a family plan and that is not the Cadillac Plan that we have.

Maintaining the same high level benefits without having members pay a part of the premium is our number one priority. We also want to keep deductibles and co-payments to a minimum.

Members, however, have to

understand the collective bargaining process. There is not an unlimited amount of money on the table during negotiations, and the union has to establish priorities.

Does the money go

towards wage increases, medical benefits, pensions, or the host of other considerations listed in the questionnaire? Union negotiators have to make a decision on where the money should go in terms of the priorities of their members.

You can help protect your medical benefits by using them wisely. Some cost-saving measures include

staying out of the expensive emergency room (unless there is no other choice), using generic prescription drugs, and staying within the plan’s network. This may be an appropriate time to urge you to understand your coverage. Knowing what is and what is not covered can save you a lot of frustration and out-of-pocket expenses.

Remember, we are keeping your priorities in mind! As negotiations begin, my primary goal as the chief negotiator is to ensure that there is no premium payments by the members and to minimize the copayments and deductibles for visits and drugs.

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

It was no surprise that maintaining your medical benefits was your number one priority.

You can help protect your medical benefits by using them wisely.

Feature: Entourage

Teamsters Help Make Show a Hit

"My entire life has been about timing, I always seem to be in the right place when I need to be," said Greagrey Waldrop, Transportation Coordinator for the hit HBO show "Entourage."

Waldrop joined Local 399 in 1997 after a few years working in various motion picture industry positions. After joining the Teamsters, he felt a sense of camaraderie that had been lacking in jobs he had previously held.

"Prior to this I had never continued doing the same thing for very long, as I would easily grow bored," he explained. "I was finally at home with a career when I joined the Teamsters. It was great to belong somewhere."

In 2002, Waldrop worked on the feature "S.W.A.T." where he met Tommy Rizzo, who introduced him to a new group of Teamsters, including Wayne Williams. Williams, the Coordinator for the feature "Coach Carter," inspired Waldrop to continue pushing his career forward.

Through these new Teamster contacts, especially Mike Davis from the "Coach Carter" set, Waldrop landed a job during the first season of "Entourage" driving the camera truck. In season two he moved to the wardrobe trailer, and by the third season he was an alternating Captain. Waldrop eventually became the only Captain for seasons five and six, and developed an efficient working relationship with his Co-Captain Greg Benedick.

This season, the seventh for "Entourage," has seen Waldrop move into the Coordinating position, with Benedick as Captain and Jason Chamberlin as the new Co-Captain. "We have a great crew," explained



Nick Davis, John Forester, Jack Campbell and Andre Bond



Tommy Rizzo and Tony Cousimano



Jack Campbell and Nick Davis



Left to Right: Jorge Velasquez, John Grajeda, Maryellen Fritts, Ed Carmona

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Waldrop, “a family, if you will. They are my dream team.”

His Teamster crew keeps the hit show running like a “well-oiled machine.” Sometimes they visit three or four locations in a day and have had to endure many sleepless nights. But, according to Waldrop, “they work their tails off and are always willing to go the extra step to keep things moving.”

The Transportation Department currently employs 32 Teamsters, although Waldrop and Benedick are the only Teamsters left from season one. “At the beginning none of us knew what to expect,” Waldrop said of his years on the “Entourage” set. “It’s great to have an opportunity to work on a show at the ground level and take the long journey upward. With hard work, any Teamster out there can push their career forward.”

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



Left to Right: Greagrey Waldrop, Jason Chamberlin, Leo Reed, Wayne Williams, Greg Benedick



Greg Benedick, Transport Captain

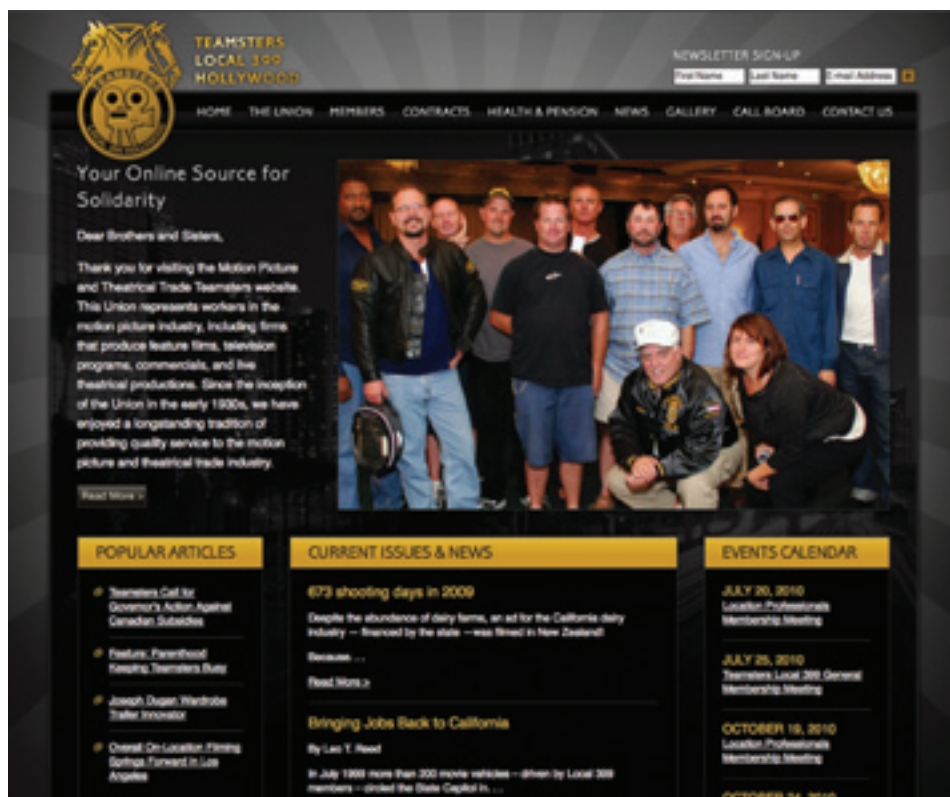


Greagrey Waldrop, Transport Coordinator

Attention: Time to Update Your Bookmarks!

A redesigned Local 399 website has just been launched. Here's what you can find if you visit www.ht399.org:

- Up to date union news
- View your contracts
- Local 399 bylaws for your reference
- Member photo gallery
- Video clips of union events
- Past issues of the Newsreel
- Links to union, medical benefit and pension related sites
- Update your contact information
- Sign up for the email list to have the latest news sent to your inbox



Grievance Victory Helps Two Injured Members

Thanks to the action of Local 399 and its legal staff, two members who were denied full disability payments have both received their full settlements.

The difficulty began when the payroll company, Cast and Crew, failed to deduct State Disability Payments for the two individuals while they were working in Massachusetts and New Orleans. The payroll company reasoned that since they were working out-of-state there was no reason to make SDI deductions.

Esther Kelly had been in Massachusetts in 2008 filming "The Proposal," while David Florio was

on the set of "Cirque du Freak: The Vampire's Assistant" in New Orleans in 2009.

The matter came to Florio's attention after he returned to California and had to undergo shoulder surgery. "I had back surgery five years ago and received disability payments of over \$900 a week. The payment for the shoulder surgery was only \$560."

Like Kelly, he protested the settlement but they were both told that since the payroll company had neglected to make contributions there was nothing that could be done.

"I thought to myself, 'That's totally wrong,'" said Florio. "I was working

for a California company and driving California equipment. I immediately called Leo at the office."

Kelly also went to the union. Secretary-Treasurer Leo Reed and Vice-President Randy Peterson contacted the local's lawyers, who won the appeal. Originally both appeals resulted in denials; however, attorney Mike Weiner advised them to request a hearing before an administrative law judge and said he would represent them at the hearing.

"I felt we had a strong case," said Weiner. He argued that the payroll company was in error in not

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Movie Locals Briefed On Contract Negotiations



Representatives of movie locals from throughout the nation and Canada gather for a quarterly meeting to discuss Local 399's upcoming studio negotiations.

Upcoming contract negotiations for a new Local 399 studio contract – scheduled to begin on June 14 – were the focus as more than 60 Teamsters from around the nation gathered for a meeting of movie locals.

The purpose of the meeting was to unify the Teamsters into a strong and determined team, as well as to brief the attendees on the goals and challenges of the upcoming talks. The contract negotiated by Local 399 will have widespread impact on all Teamster Motion Picture locals across the country, so unity is key to its success.

Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed, in his position as the IBT Director of the Motion Picture and Theatrical Trade Division, conducted the meeting. He will lead the negotiations, which will begin with a two-week long marathon session from June 14 to June 26.

"Local 399's negotiation starts on June 14th," Reed told the assembled Motion Picture Division, "and whatever happens, I guarantee, will eventually affect you too."

Secretary-Treasurer Reed has been negotiating contracts for almost two decades and his knowledge and experience will be vital for a successful outcome.

It has long been the objective of the Leo Reed administration to unify all movie locals to build added strength and leverage in negotiations. He is also seeking

a national contract to prevent studios from playing one local against another and "low bidding."

"It is about time for the most powerful union in the free world to stand up and be counted in the film industry," he advised his fellow motion picture Teamsters. "If we all help each other, all of our members in the entertainment industry will benefit."

Although negotiations are still being formulated, the movie industry representatives were briefed on the proposed additions and changes to what is known as the black book contract. Proposals will include wage increases, maintenance of medical benefits with no insurance premiums paid by members and increases in pension contributions.

The attendees — underlining the significance of the meeting — included IBT Vice Presidents John T. Coli from Chicago and Tyson Johnson from Dallas, Texas and Edward Keyser, Executive Administrator of the IBT. The locals represented were from California, New York, Massachusetts, Boston, Philadelphia, Detroit, New Mexico, South Carolina, Louisiana, Texas, Illinois, Florida, Mississippi and Canada.

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General President James P. Hoffa and Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed



International Vice President Tyson Johnson with Local 728 Representative Renee Hinson



Local 728 Business Agent and Movie Division Representative Jerry Carter



Local 728 Secretary-Treasurer Jimi Richards



Michael Scott, President of Local 769 with Local 399 Attorney Joe Kaplon and IBT Attorney Brad Raymond

Organizing Musical Composers Benefits All Local 399 Members

Organizing musical composers can be a win-win situation for all 4,000 Local 399 members as well as the 600 members of the Association of Media Composers and Lyricists (AMCL).

Not only would Local 399 gain additional prestige and power during negotiations due to its expanded reach in the industry, but also the AMCL would have the ability to bargain for what they want: medical insurance and pension benefits from the AMPTP.

Almost 300 AMCL members have signed authorization cards indicating that they want to be represented by the Hollywood Teamsters and it is expected that more will be returned in the coming weeks.

In the organizing meetings held at USC on March 5 and at the Writers Guild on April 19, their members expressed hope that the Teamsters will negotiate a contract with the Association of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP). Composers and songwriters are the only creatives left in the business who have no union protection, having disbanded their previous union in 1982.

At the April 19 meeting, over 250 AMCL members were greeted at the Writers Guild Theater by the Teamsters Joint Council 42 big rig. It was a visual reminder of the power wielded by the Teamsters, as well as the solidarity among all the JC 42 locals in support of the AMCL.

Secretary Treasurer Leo T. Reed welcomed the potential members and gave his support to the group. He stressed that Teamster representation would be good for the AMCL as well as current Local 399 members.



Steve Dayan



David Young, Executive Director WGA West

"As we all know, we work in a make-believe industry," Reed said. "The Teamsters are definitely not make-believe. All the Teamsters throughout the US stand shoulder to shoulder and come to each others' aid in times of need."

Local 399 has continued to improve its cachet and bargaining power

in Hollywood by adding casting directors and location managers to its membership of drivers, wranglers, animal trainers, auto service personnel, couriers, dispatchers, mechanics and prop house personnel. Each time it brings in a new group, this local increases its bargaining power for all.

Business Agent and Organizer Steve Dayan, who has been an integral part of the campaign, read a statement from General President James P. Hoffa in support of the AMCL. "On behalf of our 1.4 million members, the Teamsters Union stands shoulder to shoulder with you," Hoffa's letter began. "In forming a partnership with Local 399, you are taking a strong first step. The Teamsters are fully committed to fight with you for justice, dignity and respect."

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"On behalf of our 1.4 million members, the Teamsters Union stands shoulder to shoulder with you," wrote General President James P. Hoffa in support of the AMCL drive. "In forming a partnership with Local 399, you are taking a strong first step. The Teamsters are fully committed to fight with you for justice, dignity and respect."



Ray Colcord, Leo Reed, Sean Callery, Bruce Broughton, Steve Dayan, Mike Post, Richard Gibbs, Snuffy Walden, Vivek Maddala, Alf Clausen and Christopher Klatman



Attendees at composers' meeting



Golf Winners



1st Low Gross - Geno Hart, Curtis Clark, Steve Weible and Jimmy Glesin.



1st Low Net - Tony Cousimano, Dave Shafer, Scott Goudreau and Todd Starks.

Women's Closest to the Pin - Celeste Pawol

Women's Longest Drive - Nicole Reed

Men's Closest to the Pin - John Batiuk

Men's Closest to the Pin - Todd Starks

Men's Closest to the Pin - Geno Hart

Men's Closest to the Pin - Ravi Mehta

Men's Closest to the Pin - Buck Compton

Men's Longest Drive - Steve Weible

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2nd Low Net - Gary Paulsen, Jim Frear, Mark Glennie and Steve Morrey.



3rd Low Net - Jim Falcon, George Gonzalez, Steve Mullaly and Manny Zaragoza.



4th Low Net - Chris Koch, Jerry Roberg, Mike Moynhand and Randy Crowder.



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Grievance Victory Helps Two Injured Members

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deducting SDI payments and the two injured workers should not suffer. He pointed out that the two were hired in California, worked for a California company, used California equipment, and their paychecks were processed in

California.

The hearing officers agreed: Florio received a \$6,000 settlement and Kelly was awarded full payments.

“We are very happy for Esther and David and are glad they came to

us for help,” Reed stated. “Now we are having discussions with the Cast and Crew payroll company to make sure this never happens again.”

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