



Teamsters Local 399

NewsReel

Motion Picture & Theatrical Division

www.ht399.org

Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed

Spring 2013

Special Feature General Membership Meetings

Signing in...



Packed house...



Swearing in members...



Opportunity to talk with union officers...



Open mike...





Message from the Secretary-Treasurer By Leo T. Reed

Positive Report on Health and Pension Benefits

Here is the important update you and your family need — about the security of your medical and pension benefits.

Our plan actuaries reported that last year contributions by the IATSE and Local 399 with the rest of the Basic Crafts were more than 77 million hours that were paid into the plan. This demonstrates how strong our industry is in Southern California.

In addition, \$405 million in residuals were received to pay for benefits. This was an all-time high, eclipsing the previous record of \$378 million — yet another indication of our industry's endurance.

Total contribution revenue reached the \$1 billion plateau for the first time in the plan's history. This is all-important to the Studio Drivers, Location Managers, and Casting Directors who receive their benefits through the Motion Picture Industry Pension and Health Plans.

Quality management and recovery of the stock market have strengthened the Pension Plan's safety and security. It remains in what is termed the 'Green Zone,' funded above the 80 percent level. An excellent return of 10.9 percent on investments was reported, as well as an 11.2 percent return on Individual Account Plans.

The report is both positive and cautionary. The fund's reserves are healthy and more than \$850 million was paid out last year in benefits. However, medical expenses are rising at more than seven

percent each year, which could make the same benefits cost \$1 billion by 2015.

During our contract talks in 2012 we faced higher costs and a \$425 million deficit caused by the 2008 market crash. Some call it the recession of 2007 to 2009. We negotiated provisions that reduced this deficit by requiring the producers to pay an additional \$1 an hour contribution along with settling the lawsuit for non-affiliates and changing from Blue Shield to Blue Cross, thus erasing approximately \$260 million out of the \$425 million deficit. However, union members had to contribute too in monthly premiums: 41 percent pay \$0.00, 29.5 percent pay \$25.00, 29.5 percent pay \$50.00 and Retirees pay \$0.00. Even with the 29.5 percent paying \$50.00 a month, it is still one of the best health care coverages in the Nation with the cheapest cost to the members.

You may recall that I was against member contributions and proposed diverting one percent of the first year's pay raise with no premiums. It will be interesting at our next negotiations.

Now, with expertise gained from many years, we are monitoring the situation well. Your Local 399 leadership will do everything possible to preserve the high quality health and pension benefits you have always had through this local.

Local 399 continues to work for you on all the vital issues where you deserve the best member services.



Former City Council President
Eric Garcetti

Leading Mayoral Candidates Visit Local 399

The influence of the Hollywood Teamsters was apparent when the two principal contenders for Mayor of the City of Los Angeles appeared at consecutive general membership meetings.

Former City Council President Eric Garcetti spoke at the October meeting to introduce himself and invite Local 399 support. Introduced by President Tony Cousimano, he revealed that he came from a strong union family. He said he was proud to represent the industry of Hollywood. Eric Garcetti recently introduced a resolution waiving permit and location fees for pilots shot in the City of Los Angeles.

The January membership meeting featured mayoral candidate and City Controller Wendy Greuel. Familiar to Hollywood, she has been a member of the California Film Commission for over a decade and a

former executive at DreamWorks SKG. She has a unique understanding of the entertainment industry and what the city and state can do to combat runaway production.

Ms. Greuel has worked closely with Local 399 and helped secure the initial 5 year, \$100 million of filming incentives on the state level annually, beginning in fiscal year 2009 through fiscal year 2013-14. She also worked to eliminate filming fees on City-owned properties and reduced barriers for filming in Los Angeles by making City departments better partners with the film industry.



President Tony Cousimano, Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed, City Controller Wendy Greuel and Vice President Ed Duffy

General Member

Local 399 membership meetings offer something for everyone. New members are sworn in and meet their brothers and sisters, and retirees from the local receive their honors. It's a good opportunity to hear reports from the leadership and Business Agents, as well as an introduction to political candidates in the region. Perhaps most important of all, it is a chance to talk with the people who represent you in this diverse entertainment industry labor union.

At the quarterly meetings on Sunday mornings at the Pickwick Gardens in Burbank, often with overflow crowds, members learn the status of all studio contract negotiations, hear what their fellow members have to say, and vote.

Among the vital issues that recur are the local's non-stop efforts to create and protect jobs, as well as the preservation of pension and medical benefits.

"Jobs, jobs, jobs!" emphasizes Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed, who has made job creation in the industry a hallmark of his administration. He gives regular reports on efforts to extend incentives and keep Hollywood jobs at home. He reports on Local 399's success in organizing low budget shows, mobisodes, webisodes, reality shows and commercials. He details the vigilant effort to prevent other unions from doing Teamster work and our aggressive effort to organize non-union shows.

January's meeting featured Secretary-Treasurer Reed stating that we are Number One in the Teamster Nation in organizing. "The rest of the country's workers, in the private sector, is less than 8% organized, and we are over 90% organized," he said. "Teamsters Local 399 organizes and signs between 10 and 30 productions a month."

These meetings traditionally open with a respectful period of silence as the names of recently deceased members are read. This, followed up by the swearing-in of new members, gives them an opportunity to experience the camaraderie that comes from being a Hollywood Teamster.

General membership meetings often include guest speakers. Representatives of the Motion Picture Trust explain medical plan and pension changes. Candidates for public office come vying



ership Meetings



for Hollywood Teamster endorsements. At the last two meetings both leading candidates for Los Angeles mayor, Eric Garcetti and Wendy Greuel appeared to seek Local 399 support (see accompanying story).

As Chief Executive Officer, Secretary-Treasurer Leo Reed gives detailed reports to keep the membership well informed. During the October quarterly meeting he reported that Local 399 responded well to a voter registration drive. This local had the highest percentage of registered voters in the twenty-one locals of Joint Council 42 — with over sixty percent of our members registered.

Business Agent reports by Tony Cousimano, Steve Dayan, Ed Duffy, Shanda Laurent, Tom Marchetti, Leo Reed Jr. and George Nadian hold interest for all attendees. They demonstrate what they are doing to represent the members through organizing, processing grievances and resolving problems. The underlying message to the members is that cooperation is vital. Members should call them — anonymously if necessary — to report contract violations that often cost them money, other unions doing Teamster work, or shows that could be successfully organized.

The two-hour membership meetings traditionally end with an open mike session, where members have the opportunity to publicly ask questions, make comments, and offer suggestions. “This is union transparency in action,” declares Leo Reed.

Members are urged to participate in union activities by attending the general membership meetings. They are held the last Sunday of the month in January, April, July and October.

**Time: 8:00 am
Location: Pickwick Gardens
1001 Riverside Dr.
Burbank, CA 91506**

Members Honored at California On Location Awards

More than 500 entertainment-industry professionals and community leaders gathered at the landmark Langham Huntington Hotel in Pasadena on October 28 for the 18th annual California On Location Awards (COLA). Teamsters Local 399 was very involved, as in past years, in the event and proudly celebrated the accomplishments of members honored for their exemplary work.

COLA salutes Location Professionals, production companies, and public employees for professional excellence while working on location in California. The annual awards ceremony is the flagship event of Film Liaisons In California Statewide (FLICS), a non-profit organization dedicated to keeping film and television production jobs in California.

Local 399 was a platinum-level sponsor of the awards, including Assistant Location Manager in the television and feature-film categories. Business Agents Steve Dayan and Ed Duffy served as judges.

"COLA is an important night for the film community and for our members. It's an opportunity to salute the fantastic work of people who are keeping so many production jobs local and raise the awareness of how vital the job of Location Manager is to the industry," said Duffy.

Actor Lorenzo Lamas emceed a delightful evening in an elegant setting. Awards were given to Location Managers, Commercial Scout Managers, Assistant Location Managers, and Location Teams in numerous film, television genres and commercials, as well as to public employees who have worked to facilitate in-state filming.

Local 399 members made up the vast majority of award winners. Member Gregory Alpert, who worked on the TV episodic *LUCK*, was honored as Location Professional of the Year.

"Location Managers do important work in keeping production jobs local. Our local union is proud to be a part of this event honoring the role they play in keeping film and TV jobs in California," said Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed.

COLA AWARDS



Location Team of the Year- TV Episodic
"Southland"



Location Team of the Year- Independent Feature Film-
"Knight of Cups"



Gregory Alpert - Location Professional of the Year- TV Episodic- "LUCK"



Eva Schroeder – Assistant Location Manager for TV – "The Client List"



Keomanee Vilaythong – Assistant Location Manager for Features – Magnus Rex "The Dark Knight Rises"



Scott Allen Logan - Location Professional of the Year- Commercials- "Gymkhana 5"



Chris Baugh- Location Professional of the Year - Feature - "Argo"



Caleb Duffy- Location Professional of the Year Independent Feature film - "Hitchcock"



Sony Couriers followed the January meeting by ratifying a 3-year agreement.



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Meet the New Trustee: Wayne Stone

Wayne Stone has been appointed the newest trustee on the Local 399 Executive Board. He takes the seat vacated by Jack Fisher.

As one of three elected member trustees, Stone represents rank-and-file members on the Executive Board. Trustees participate in all board discussions and votes, verify the local's books, and more. The board votes on issues such as benefits and how the local union can support members who are sick or otherwise struggling.

"I'm grateful for how the officers stand up for members," said Stone. "Leo Reed is a great and gracious leader."

Stone has been a Local 399 member since 1973. He has worked in motion-picture transportation as a Driver, Captain, and Coordinator. For the last four seasons, Stone has been set Captain on the Warner Bros show *The Mentalist*. He runs the transportation on set during location shoots.

"I hope to bring my 40 years' experience to the table as trustee," he said. "Being out in the field, working all the shows that I've worked, I have a lot of insight and knowledge."

Stone is a second-generation union member. His father was a unionized Prop Master. "I've always been a union guy," Stone said. "I always go to the meetings and sit in the front row. I really value the backing, the camaraderie, knowing I am working for my pension, the health benefits and good living — everything that comes with being in a union."

Before starting his career in the film industry, Stone was a truck driver for the US Army in Alaska. Outside his work, Stone is a devoted father of two adult daughters. He also loves to go fishing with friends, and has done so in places as far-flung as Alaska, the Sea of Cortez, Florida, and Oregon.

Stone recently attended his first Executive Board meeting as a trustee. "I enjoyed every minute of it," he said enthusiastically.

