



Teamsters Local 399

NewsReel

Motion Picture & Theatrical Division

Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed

www.ht399.org

Summer 2012



In this Issue

Report on Contract Negotiations Page 3

Beware: "Campaign Finance Reform"
Page 6

Welcome Studio Services Page 8

Vintage Wheels on *LA Noir* Page 10

X NO! on "Campaign Finance Reform"

***Danger:* Anti-Union Measure
On November Ballot**



Message from the Secretary-Treasurer

By Leo T. Reed

Update on Negotiations

Regarding our "Black Book" contract, for the first time ever, as a result of the 2008 market crash, our Motion Picture Industry Pension and Health Plan was projected to suffer a huge deficit of \$350 million through 2015. If we included the 13th and 14th checks for our retirees who retired prior to 2009, it will be \$425 million. It definitely will be our top priority in our negotiations. This has never happened before. Our dilemma is how to pay for this deficit. We participated in the IATSE negotiations in the Health and Pension negotiations, where the Producers proposed to pay over \$240 million of the deficit up front. This unity was unprecedented. We still had a shortfall of over \$200 million to deal with. The amount of 30.5¢ was taken from the IAP and left 6% intact. We also had a choice of taking 1% in wages or paying a premium. The premium was limited to \$0 for individuals; \$25 for individuals plus one; \$50 for individuals plus family; and \$0 for retirees and families. There was no choice because the wage reduction with no premium would cost significantly more than going along with the premiums and no wage reduction. I have been asked about the future and what kind of increases in the premiums we can expect. While I have no crystal ball, I commit to keeping these premiums at a minimum if we agree.

The IATSE negotiations have been completed and they are starting their ratification push (check out the Daily Variety dated 4/21/2012).

In negotiations, the IATSE have always started before us, and if both parties (IATSE & management) agree, their

recommendation on the PH&W will go to the Fund's Directors for a vote.

If we didn't agree on the solution to the deficit, it wouldn't leave us with much choice. We either accept it or we strike.

It would force us to take extreme measures when it is our turn in negotiations. The last time that we didn't accept their agreement was 9 years ago, when the former leadership of the IATSE agreed to take a 23% weekly cut in pay for television contingent on Local 399 agreeing also. I said, "Bullshit!" Immediately with the support of our General President and the entire Teamster Nation, the Producers withdrew the proposal. Thus, we helped the IATSE members too. I surely hope that they didn't forget that, because today some of them were disappointed in our initial reluctance to accept the premiums that were agreed to. While we had an alternate plan, the premiums were still a better and a cheaper option. If ratified by the IATSE membership, the AMPTP & IATSE Directors of the Health Fund will implement the Premiums.

The only other option left is to strike, but it will be foolish to strike on a contract on a total package that has wage increases and no takeaways, even when you include the premiums. The premiums are \$0 for a participant, \$25 a month for participant plus 1, and \$50 a month for the participant and the entire family irrespective of the numbers. Retirees are \$0 including their families. Everything else remains the same. It is still the best plan in Hollywood, and one of the best in the country. Facing the huge deficit of \$425 million dollars, Matt Loeb and Mike Miller had the members' interest at heart, and we support them. We will never condemn the men in the arena.

My biggest fear on the premiums is that once the Studios get their foot in the door, what is next?

The IATSE has concluded its negotiations. We will continue with our "Black Book" negotiations in June.

Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed Reports on Contract Negotiations



13th and 14th checks for retirees.”

Another challenge is that IATSE has already agreed to a contract renewal. It began talks in early March and has accepted — subject to ratification by the members — a three-year agreement. If ratified, it will bring a two-percent wage increase for each year compounded and a 3.3 percent increase in benefit contributions paid by the employers for a total of 5.3%.

The Teamsters had an alternative proposal with no premiums. However, for right now, the plan that was proposed by the IATSE was better economically. Secretary-Treasurer Reed is philosophically opposed to members paying a por-

The status of the contract negotiations, with economic issues that will have an impact on studio drivers as well as future negotiations for location managers and casting directors, was the dominant subject at the quarterly general membership meeting.

In a lengthy, detailed report, Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed discussed the progress and challenges of ongoing talks with the producers.

Secretary-Treasurer Reed is the spokesman for the 7,000 basic crafts members, which include the Teamsters, Laborers, IBEW, plumbers, electricians, plasterers and cement masons. IATSE negotiates economic issues separately for its 15 West Coast locals which have approximately 50,000 members.

“Preserving quality health care benefits and protecting pensions are our overriding concerns,” reported Reed, citing a survey returned by more than a thousand members. “We know how important these concerns are to you and we are taking your priorities to the negotiating table.”

“One of the challenges,” he reported, *“is that the Motion Picture Industry Pension and Health Plan is projected to suffer a deficit of \$425 million this year, when you include the*



tion of the benefits premium and believes it starts a dangerous precedent. “So we are committed to keeping the premiums low and reasonable if we agree. Even though the producers have rejected our proposal, *I believe that our concept has had a tremendous effect on the producers’ negotiating team. It has been successful in ultimately keeping everyone’s premium contributions low,”* reported Secretary-Treasurer Reed.

“Because of the cooperation between the

Continued next page

Teamsters, basic crafts and IATSE, the agreement now will require NO premium contributions for individuals, only \$25 a month for active members plus one, and \$50 a month for members and their families,” he stated. Retirees and their families pay no premiums.

More than 300 members packed the meeting hall where Secretary-Treasurer Reed made his report. David Cohen, a driver at Hertz Entertainment, was one of many members who stood at the mike and addressed the audience. “Times are hard and medical costs are expensive,” he said. “It’s worth a small premium contribution to protect our benefits, but it scares me to think what may happen three years from now.”

However, reflecting the opinions of many fellow speakers, Cohen expressed his confidence in Secretary-Treasurer Leo Reed to negotiate the best possible contract renewal.



Ralph Clare Annual Golf Tournament



1st GROSS - David Gerry, Arthur Martinez, Mike Avila and Eric Peterson



3rd NET - Dana Crocker, John Crocker, Gerald Lyons and Brendan Lyons



1st NET - Ric Belyeu, Gary Paulsen, Mark Glen-nie and Ronnie Chung



4th NET - Mike Swann, Craig Budrick, Jeff Budrick and Jeff Wynn



2nd NET - Pete Fake, Mike Kaplon, Martin Perez and Johnny Cota



LAST PLACE - Tom Inman, Craig Polydor, Ray Borton and Mark Kelly

BEWARE: *“Campaign Finance Reform”*

A falsely named initiative will be on the California ballot this November and it is vital that every union family oppose it.

It is called *“Campaign Finance Reform”* but union leaders have correctly called it the *“Paycheck Deception”* or *“Corporate Deception”* initiative.

What it does is take away the unions’ political power by prohibiting unions from contributing to political campaigns and from using voluntary payroll deductions for any political purposes.

This is a direct blow at organized labor’s ability to advocate for its members. This measure would restrict political fundraising by unions, whose members normally pay their dues through payroll deduction – and a portion of that helps our lobbying and political efforts.

The deceptive ballot initiative has gathered over 900,000 signatures to qualify for the November 2012 California ballot. However, the measure is not about campaign finance reform, as its backers claim. The millionaire supporters of this ballot initiative have created a giant loophole that would allow for unlimited corporate spending on political campaigns – but restrict unions.

This initiative would result in big corporations and their lobbyists having even greater influence over our political system. Corporations already outspend unions 19-1 in politics. This initiative would destroy any opposition to the agenda of big corporations – and that includes outsourcing jobs, slash-

ing wages and health benefits and attacking retirement security.

The key backers of these attacks on workers are the same groups that always try to block increases in the minimum wage, undercut job safety laws and reduce funding for education and social programs. They know working families and their unions are fighting against corporate greed, and they want to silence our voice on the job, in legislation and in politics.

It is important that all members recognize how dangerous this ballot measure would be and work together with their families, friends and co-workers to defeat this truly destructive initiative.

Voter Registration

Campaign Begins:

Are you registered to vote in the November 6 election?

This fall’s election is one of the most important in decades. At stake is the presidency, one-third of the Senate seats and all seats in the House of Representatives.

“We need to elect worker-friendly politicians who will protect pension and labor laws, as well as health care benefits,” said Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed. “Everything from education policy to health care and taxes goes through the US House of

Takes Away Unions' Political Power



Representatives and the Senate. The party in control makes a big difference. The balance of power could hinge on this.”

In California, the big challenge is to defeat the misleading “*Campaign Finance Reform Initiative*.”

The highest priority is to register members and their families to vote by mail — what used to be called an absentee ballot. Voting by mail is best because it is the most convenient. Studies show that more people vote when the ballot can be mailed in, instead of going in person to the polling place. In recent elections, over half of those who voted used mail instead of going to the polling place.

Re-registering is necessary for members who have moved since the last general election. Americans move, on average, every

five years — so this is why the union is making a huge effort to make sure members are registered.

Every vote is important. “*If we complain but don’t vote, we will not prevail, and we need to change that,*” emphasized Secretary-Treasurer Reed.

**Last Day to Register to
Vote – October 9**

**Last Day to Apply for
Mail-in Ballot – October 30**

Local 399 Welcomes Studio Services, Inc.

After decades of working with Local 399 members, Studio Services, Inc., is happy to be part of the Local 399 family. When approached by Business Agent / Organizer Steve Dayan, they voluntarily recognized the union. As Dayan said, "They appreciate what the Teamsters do."

Sylmar-based Studio Services is a close-knit, employee-friendly company that rents specialized vehicles to the motion-picture industry. One of the largest suppliers of transportation equipment to the movie industry, they are a natural fit for Hollywood Teamsters Local 399, the Motion Picture and Theatrical Trade Division, which has represented workers in the movie business since the 1930s.

Studio Services president Randy Sain said his company has been a supporter of Local 399 since the company started in the 1970s. During the 1988 strike, they were one of three vendors to pull equipment from production companies in support of the union. Sain said that Dayan's "vision" and "creativity" made it easy for Studio Services to voluntarily unionize this year. "We were able to negotiate a contract that we're all excited about and that financially makes sense for us and, most importantly, is in the best interest of the employees," he stated. He is pleased that Studio Services is now part of Local 399: "In the motion picture industry that carries a great deal of weight – we're not a company that's on the outside rooting for Local 399, we're now part of the family."

Studio Services employee Hugo Torres is looking forward to the increased work opportunities he'll enjoy as a member of Local 399: "More work is better for us," he agreed. Twenty-eight-year employee Robert Beauchamp is likewise glad to be part of the Local 399 family: "I've been working with guys in the union for years. They're



Randy Sain-President, " . . .we're not a company that's on the outside rooting for Local 399, we're now part of the family."



Ramiro Estrada- Mechanic



Marco Antonio Cantoral- Body Shop

During the 1988 strike, they were one of three vendors to pull equipment from production companies in support of the union.

good guys. I'm glad to be part of it."

Howard Buck, principal at Studio Services, is the son of a proud retired Local 399 Driver. "We've always wanted to support the union," Buck says. "About 85-90 percent of our truck rentals are to Local 399 members. We want to have a good working relationship with our customers and with the Teamsters."

The Studio Services/Local 399 contract went into effect April 1. The company and the union look forward to this relationship growing and developing. "We are happy to be aboard," Studio Services' Sain said. From the union side, Dayan declared, "We look forward to a long and fruitful relationship."



The proud union cards of E.H. Buck, the father of Howard Buck, hang proudly in the front desk.



Mitchell Phillips- Lot Guy



Hugo Torres- Body Work

Vintage Wheels on *LA Noir*

Drivers Take Vintage Wheels On *LA Noir* Pilot Run

The pilot for a new period crime drama, set in the 1940's, was shot in May in Los Angeles, with Local 399 drivers behind the wheel of specialty vintage cars.

Writer/Director Frank Darabont, known for *The Walking Dead*, is bringing John Buntin's book *LA Noir: The Struggle for the Soul of America's Most Seductive City* to television on TNT. The 1940s-'50s drama is based on the true story of the LAPD's long pursuit of mobster Mickey Cohen. *Walking Dead's* Jon Bernthal plays LAPD officer Joe Teague.

The *LA Noir* pilot's entire transportation department was composed of Local 399 members. Captain Tommy Rizzo reported there were 28 members on the show, shooting on locations all over LA. Rizzo said, "It's great that this project is about LA and we're not shooting in New York or Louisiana (because it might be cheaper) —we're actually shooting in LA."

Brothers Jeff and Victor Moore, who joined Local 399 within a few months of each other 17 years ago, were both drivers on the pilot show. Jeff was enthusiastic: "We don't get to do many period pieces. It's been interesting and exciting to work with these older cars and the older gentleman who owns the cars. All of the Teamsters really enjoyed working on this pilot."

Rizzo explained, "It's challenging dealing with 1919-1947 period vehicles," and he emphasized that having a solid crew with Group 1 experience has benefited the project. Well-experienced Captains and Coordinators were able to work on the *LA Noir* pilot.

Their automotive and film/television experience mattered a lot on a show that



Greagrey Waldrop, Jeff Moore, Shawn Cook, Alex Connaughton, Jimmy Tornero, Bob Barbosa



Location Managers-Ron Haynes, John Panzarella, David Park

1919 to 1947 Period Vehicles

featured 60 vintage picture cars on a 12-day shoot. “When you have these very well-qualified guys, it makes the job a lot easier – everybody knows what they’re doing, and they can all jump in and help one another out,” said Coordinator Greagrey Waldrop.

If the show gets picked up, Rizzo expressed the hope that “we would run 28 people. Every vehicle has a body on it.” Local 399 could benefit in the future from many additional show episodes shot in the Los Angeles area.



Jimmy Tornero - 36 year veteran



Jeff Moore



Brad Webert and Victor Moore



Tommy Rizzo-Captain



**Visit Your Union Web Site:
www.ht399.org**



TEAMSTERS LOCAL 399

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

Visit Your Union Web Site:

www.ht399.org



PRESORT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Los Angeles, CA
Permit No. 34694

