



Motion Picture & Theatrical Division

www.ht399.org

Teamsters Local 399 NewsReel

Secretary-Treasurer Leo T. Reed

May-June 2011

Meet the Managers Location Event

page 11



Annual Ralph Clare Golf Tournament

page 8



Torchwood Comes To L.A.

page 6

Standard or Criterion for Business Agents: Now and for the Future

Message from the Secretary-Treasurer

By Leo T. Reed

I have already evaluated three candidates for Business Agents. One is already hired and we plan to hire another on the first of July. Mel Cavett's position is filled and Randy Peterson's will be filled on July 1st. There is a third candidate that we are interested in but there is no vacancy. However, in the future when we are hiring, the criterion or standard for future candidates is basically simple. It is loyalty and total commitment to the Rank and File.

I demand loyalty to the Membership, and it can't be taught. It is innate; it is inborn. Some have it, and some just don't. Also and most important: a Business Agent must be totally committed. Yes, totally committed to the Rank and File first, and not to the coordinators or anyone whom they might have worked for, for many years. It is all about who I expect them to represent, the Rank and File. I could not believe it, but a number of former Business Agents had a problem with that.

Throughout the years, I had to terminate eight Business Agents, and four were former coordinators and captains. Most were fired because they could not break away, after working many years for the employers. Some were reluctant to file grievances against their former employers. A couple of Business Agents were actually apologetic when they had to go against their former bosses. One stated, "I did not want to file a grievance, but I was overruled by Leo." I fired him

the next day. I believe that a few of those former Business Agents had a hard time keeping confidential information, probably to brag, to show how important they were, that they were in the know, or they simply could not break the bond with the producers, just in case.

"I demand loyalty to the Membership, and it can't be taught. It is innate; it is inborn. Some have it, and some just don't. . . a Business Agent must be totally committed. Yes, totally committed to the Rank and File."

They refused to break the ties with their employers because, if we had lost the election, they would still be able to work for their former bosses. To survive, they straddled the fence. I got rid of them. For me and the rest who are totally committed only to the Rank and File, we would be gone if we lost the election, as you know, and would have a difficult time finding jobs because we were committed. It is OK. It is cool because we wouldn't want to work for people like that under any circumstance. We made the commitment years ago and will never change. It is all or nothing! That is the only way that a Union can be effective.

Recently, a coordinator stated in front of his producer that



his loyalty was not to the Union but to the producer who sat right next to him. In essence, he was telling us that he had the right to violate the contract on behalf of the producer. I promise you that after the Union wins the grievance against the producer (company), we will file internal charges against him with the Trial Board. I assure you that we do our job legally in accordance with the By-Laws and International Constitution. We will take care of business, legally. At least that fool was honest enough to say how he felt. I do believe that most of the coordinators feel the same way about the loyalty to the producers, but they won't say it. Look, it is OK to be loyal to your boss, but it is not OK and it is wrong to violate the contract, and screw the members just to please your boss. Again, I will say it. We have responded when the Members called, and we will continue to do our job. In the past we have filed charges against those coordinators who violated the contract and By-Laws, and 6 were found guilty. One was expelled and

Continued on page 3

Standard or Criterion for Business Agents continues

5 were fined with the guarantee of expulsion the next time. Just call us, even anonymously. We are committed! We will do our job.

It is sad, but it is a fact that at least 80% of our grievances are caused by a group of selfish coordinators, even more than studio management. One had the nerve to condemn this administration and suggest who I should hire as a Business Agent. It is almost like Al Capone telling the Chief of Police who he should hire as cops. I am not talking about all the coordinators, but a hell of a lot, and most of you know who they are. I will state that there are a number of decent coordinators, and we appreciate them. We wish that there were more. I guarantee that there will be more decent and fair coordinators and captains when we are done. We will enforce the contract and By-Laws of this Union. Getting back to the criterion for hiring, as I have stated, "I will not hire any person whose loyalty is to any of those coordinators or management." Any new Business Agent must be committed to the Rank and File.

We are the longest Administration (eight terms) in Local 399's history because of the commitment that we have set, that the Rank and File are always first. The six Administrations before us were only one term each. Did they commit? I don't believe so. If they did, they may have been around a lot longer, until we came around. Those who thought they had permanent jobs are long gone, because they couldn't or wouldn't commit. "You can't run with the hare and hunt with the hounds at the same time." "You can't ride

the fence." You must make that choice. I expect all our employees to commit.

"...it is OK to be loyal to your boss, but it is not OK and it is wrong to violate the contract...."

I know that I have been redundant and repetitive with the words commit, committed, and commitment, but they must be emphasized! It is the responsibility, duty, and promise to the members, period! Commit or quit! When I first hired Randy Peterson, he knew what those words meant. He had no ties to anyone but the Rank and File. So instructions from me were easy. I told him that he must earn the trust of the members. He knew and he did that, and he was committed to the membership. Hence, he has been one of the most aggressive and successful Business Agents in the history of this Local. I'm sad to announce that he is retiring soon. He will be missed.

"We are committed! We will do our job."

I expect the future Business Agents to be as good, if not better. Another thing, while I don't require it, I believe a high school diploma is very important. A college degree would be even better, but not necessary, because today we face Union busting high profile attorneys and CPAs. The good old days are over. A Business Agent must be literate, have good writing skills, be able to read and interpret contracts, write grievances, and

orally present his grievances against management at the second and third steps. Usually the person who represents management at the 2nd and 3rd steps is an attorney. One of the Business Agents that I fired had to be helped for almost 6 years by his fellow Business Agents and our attorney. The office staff helped him with his spelling and writing. That was OK with me for a while. Later I discovered that our attorney was practically writing his grievances for him on a regular basis. We couldn't afford that. I believe that he reluctantly filed grievances because he was having problems with his presentations at the step two and three grievance meetings. Still, I did not discharge him for that. I fired him for other reasons. As I have stated, the good old days are over. I will not hire Business Agents like him again. We cannot afford to. Our members' job protection and security are on the line. We must have competent Business Agents to fight those expensive high profile Union busting attorneys and CPAs. That is for now and for the future, and we do have plans for the future.

The New Business Agents.

"You can't run with the hare and hunt with the hounds at the same time."

Now back to the Business Agents. The first Business Agent that I have hired is Leo T. Reed, Jr. Is he loyal and committed to the Rank and File? I know that better than anyone else. Is he qualified? Just as much or even more so than most of the Business Agents when they

Continued on page 4

Standard or Criterion for Business Agents continues

were first hired. Leo Jr., who is a Group Two driver, knew all about the Black Book since he was 10 years old. It was discussed at the dinner table many nights. He has practically memorized it. He has been with me during the last three negotiations (nine years). He is aware of management tactics. He knows how I think.

“A Business Agent must be literate, have good writing skills, be able to read and interpret contracts, write grievances, and orally present his grievances against management at the second and third steps.”

He is 28 years old and has a Bachelor's Degree from UCLA. He walked his first picket line at the age of 6. He was born at Serra Memorial Hospital in the San Fernando Valley, and graduated from Westlake High School. After UCLA I wanted him to continue onto Law School, but after working as a 399 Driver in the industry he wants to be a Business Agent. That is OK with me, as long as he is in the labor movement. He is more than ready.

“We must have competent Business Agents to fight those expensive high profile Union busting attorneys and CPAs.”

The next member that I will hire as a Business Agent is 48-year old George Nadian, a Group One 15 year member. Is he committed? Of course! I can vouch for that. He

has always cooperated and worked with us when called, regarding any grievance. We know that there is somewhat of a code of silence among many drivers regarding violations, in the industry, and it is a shame. Certain drivers are afraid to report violations for fear of reprisal from their bosses. Not George, he has risked his job many times when he disagreed with his bosses openly and had called us. For example, on “Journey to the Center of the Earth,” he, as the captain, and another member reported multiple

violations. When we approached him on the set, in front of everyone and risking his job, he pointed out the violations. Yes, he is committed to the Rank and File. He has demonstrated that many times.

Retirement?

With your support I am not going anywhere. I cannot leave yet because we have a tough road ahead. Tommy O'Donnell Sr. of Local 817 in New York is 10 years older than me and still working. As long as you want me, I will be here. We have a lot of work to do.

Around the Local



Terilee Huff and her canine friend, JJ, visit the Local.

Remembering John Suttles

John Robert Suttles passed away on May 7, 2011. He was 65 years old. He is survived by his siblings Berdenia Broes, Juanita Corbett and Jack Suttles; son Shawn Suttles; daughter Lanette Leon and son-in-law Bob Leon; and grandchildren Harrison, Isabelle and Lindsey Leon.

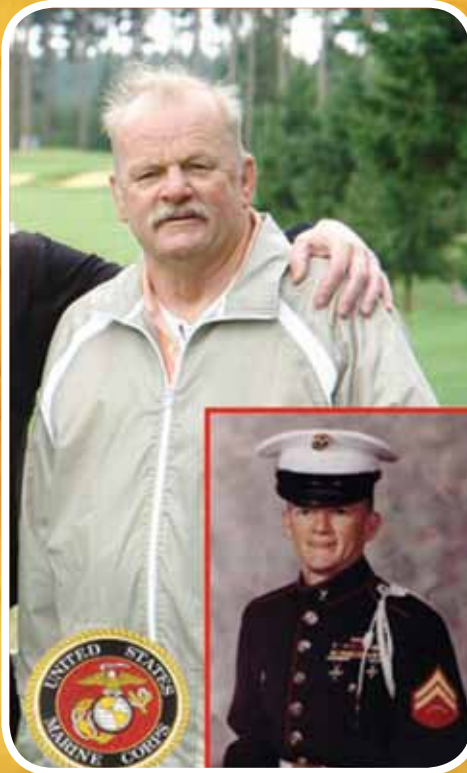
Suttles was born in Connersville, Indiana and moved to Southern California at the age of nine. His family settled in Riverside where Suttles attended Ramona High School. He left school at the age of 18 to join the Marine Corps and in 1964 was sent to Vietnam with the light infantry unit 1st Battalion, 4th Marines.

While in Vietnam he started a humanitarian effort called 'Back Our Boys' which helped hundreds of villagers. Suttles received medical supplies

from family and friends and then distributed the antibiotics, medicines and bandages to needy Vietnamese. He was honorably discharged as a Corporal in 1968 after serving four years as a Marine.

In his mid-twenties Suttles began to drive commercial trucks, a decision that led to a 40 year career. By his estimation he put in over seven million miles during the course of his driving career. He began driving for Teamsters Local 399 about 10 years ago and made many new and lasting friendships with his fellow members.

Suttles was a loving family man who moved across the street from his daughter so he could be closer to his grandchildren. During the last year of his life he made sure to visit them every day.



Around the Local



Driver Noelle Van De Car buys a women's Teamster hoodie.



Secretary-Treasurer Leo Reed and Business Agent Ed Duffy view location managers photo exhibit.

Miniseries – Torchwood Comes To L.A.

In another example of the powerful draw that Hollywood still has on foreign productions, the BBC has decided to film the newest season of its hit show Torchwood in Los Angeles.

The miniseries, which will air on Starz in America, is a science-fiction drama that previously had followed a group of alien hunters on their adventures around Wales, part of the United Kingdom. This will be the first season that the show will film principally outside of the UK.

“One of the reasons that productions come to the Los Angeles area is their desire to get the best of the best,” explained Coordinator Heath Culp,

who has been Transportation Coordinator on such shows, as Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Cold Case, Eastwick and The Whole Truth. “The crews in Hollywood are highly skilled and that is what studios are looking for when choosing a new location.”

The scale of this production is large for a television show. Coordinator Culp and his two Captains, Frankie Thomas and Mike Reese, will work with thirty to fifty drivers during the course of shooting ten episodes. With each episode taking approximately 220 man-days of work, the crew is sure to be busy for the duration of the five months of filming.

The locations team, lead by Location Manager Brad Bemis, has also been hard at work scouting areas that typify the Southern California environment and ambiance.

The producers came to Los Angeles knowing that it would be a contrast to their previous seasons filmed in Wales, Culp said of the distinctly ‘LA’ shooting locations. Venice Beach, Fort MacArthur in San Pedro, the US Bank building in Downtown LA and Inglewood are just some of the locations that have been evaluated. Equally desirable for the location work is the polish and glamour of Hollywood.



Torchwood drivers Tony Scarlata, Mike McEntyre, Ray Holmgren, Captain Frankie Thomas, Tony Franchi, Audrey Fitzgerald, Troy Flynn, Jerry Knight and Michael Pierre



Gabe Ynda, Tristan Daoussis, Joe Akerman, Brad Bemis



Meal truck crew Evaristo Martinez, Miguel Benitez, Enrique Martinez, Cook Driver Cristobal Jimenez, Andres Lopez and Omar Cardon from Bruce's Gourmet Catering



Heath Culp - Coordinator, Christian Wallace - Capt. and Nick Culp - Dispatcher

Teamsters Local 399 Annual Ralph Clare Golf Tournament



1st Low Gross - Arthur Martinez, David Gerry, Mike Avila (men's longest drive) and Jose Chacon (winner of the putting contest)



1st Low Net - Robert Ramirez, Steve Mullaly (closest to the pin # 12), George Gonzalez, and Manny Zaragoza



2nd Low Net - Ric Belyeu, Gary Paulsen, Mark Glennie and Ronnie Chong



3rd Low Net - Dino Grossi, Walt Seymoure, Bill Keanu and Danny DeFries

Teamsters Local 399 Annual Ralph Clare Golf Tournament



4th Low Net - Craig Budrick, Jeff Budrick, Joe Krongland and Mike Swann



Carlyn Couch (Women's longest drive) and Dennis Metz (Closest to the pin hole #6)



Mike Walsh Sr., John Pellegrino, Barry Eget (closest to the pin #14) and Mike Walsh Jr.



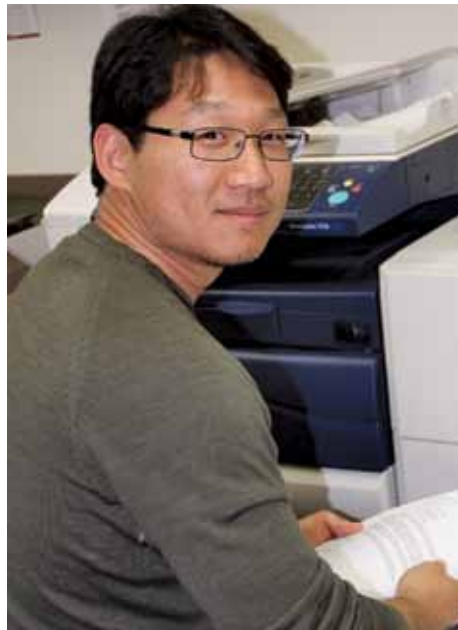
Oscar Benegas, Chuck Salet, Peter Ortega, Greg Benedict, and Louis Mussenden (closest to the pin #7)

Meet the Staff: Jason Han, Auditor

In the short time that Jason Han has been with Local 399 he has collected more than \$1 million in funds owed to members and the local. The humble Han, however, is just happy to be helping.

A graduate of UC Berkeley in 2003, Jason previously worked as a paralegal and auditor at Gilbert and Sackman. In his five years with that company he helped enforce various contracts with unions around southern California, including Teamsters Local 399. "One aspect of my career that I've always taken pride in is helping union members get the pay that they deserve," said Han. "When I got the chance to come to Local 399 and work even closer with the members I jumped at the opportunity."

That chance came in 2009 when he was hired as the local's paralegal and auditor. His job is to audit



timecards, payroll records, production reports and call sheets, all in an effort to make sure members are paid correctly. He also files grievances and arbitrations

in Local 399's historical archive, which is vital for establishing past practice and setting precedence on major issues.

Recently, the local audited retroactive payment calculations for a company that went over the MOW budget. Through the hard work of Jason and others at the local, it was discovered that an additional \$70,000 of unpaid wages and benefits were owed due to overlooked idle day, force call, sixth and seventh day, and holiday and vacation accrual.

"It is a great feeling every time one of our audits turns up money that is owed to a member," added Han, who has identified and collected \$480,000 in the last 12 months. "This is one of the reasons why the union is here – to make sure the members are paid what the contract says they should be – and to be involved in the process is very rewarding."

Around the Local



Terry Smith adds a Film Works bumper sticker to his car.



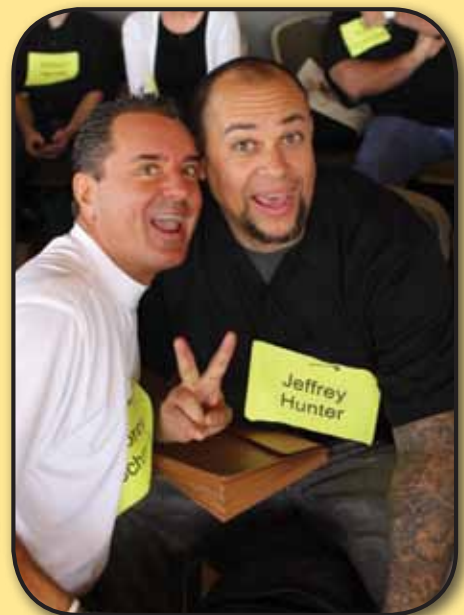
George Schmid pays his dues.

Location Managers

At the beginning of May, Local 399 Location personnel gathered for a meet-and-greet designed to bring their profession closer together.

The third annual Meet the Managers event was the brainchild of Key Assistant Location Manager Kathy McCurdy and was held in a speed-dating style of multiple rounds of mini-interviews. The goal was for location managers to meet assistants, keys and scouts whom they may not have been familiar with. It gave the managers a chance to build a bigger pool of people to call if they need to create a team, fill a spot on an existing team, or hire a day player.

"This was really a great opportunity for our members to get their resumes out face to face to location managers," explained Local 399 Business Agent Ed Duffy. "Hopefully they created some new working relationships that will help people get onto more projects."





TEAMSTERS LOCAL 399

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

FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Los Angeles, CA
Permit No. 34694

PRE-SORT FIRST CLASS

Visit Your Union Web Site:

www.ht399.org



**Be sure to visit your
Local 399 website
for news and updates
www.ht399.org**