

# TEAMSTER



# FIGHTING BACK

MEMBERS MOBILIZE FOR 2004 ELECTIONS



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# TEAMSTER

[www.teamster.org](http://www.teamster.org)



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*The Teamster* (ISSN 1083-2394) is the official publication of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, 25 Louisiana Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20001-2198. It is published bimonthly in January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October and November/December. Periodical postage paid at Washington, D.C. and at additional mailing offices.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2004 / VOLUME 101, NO.1

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A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL PRESIDENT

# The Health Care Crisis

**T**he health care crisis that is gripping our nation has affected all working Americans. Achieving and maintaining strong health care benefits in today's economic climate is the biggest challenge facing working people.

Accelerating health care costs have had a profound influence on our members at the negotiating table. In Chicago, 3,300 waste haulers were forced out on strike after management tried to cut the health care benefits of workers who perform one of the country's most dangerous jobs. In Los Angeles and Hawaii, bus drivers took to picket lines to increase their employer's health care contributions. Because of our unity, we won the transit and garbage strikes and ratified historic contracts. The Teamsters have fared better than most.

## Difficult Days

More than 90,000 United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) members walked off the job in California and four other states to protest proposed cuts to their medical benefits. We have stood with them and honored their picket lines, but the crisis looms over us as the Bush Administration continues to ignore the problem.

This year, the cost of monthly premiums is expected to increase by 12 percent. This will be the fifth year in a row with a double-digit percentage increase. These soaring health care costs are seriously impacting Teamster health plans across the country. And nonunion workers are in much more serious trouble.

Companies like Wal-Mart—with 1.1 million employees—make billions in profits by paying substandard wages, providing few benefits and using contractors that hire and abuse illegal immigrants. Wal-Mart's exploitation of its employees hurts all workers, the economy and our health care system.

## Some Solutions

The Teamsters Union is currently playing a leading role in the national effort to win universal health insurance. Never before has there been more support for a comprehensive national health care program than there is today. And Dick Gephardt—the Teamster-endorsed candidate for President in 2004—has a program that can solve the problem. His plan not only addresses the needs of the uninsured, but 160 million working Americans covered by employer-provided health care plans. A solution to the nation's health care problem is long overdue.

Being a Teamster means fighting for justice. And the battle for universal health care will take all of our strength and unity as Teamsters and as Americans. Join the movement. Write your legislators and tell them how you feel. Take part in the political process by volunteering your time to help elect friends of labor and defeat anti-worker candidates and legislation. Teamster members have always been able to make a difference and the battle is on for the security of our nation's health and welfare today and in the future.

*James P. Hoffa*

## Get On The Bus

### Local 572 Ratifies Contract With First Transit

About 250 Teamster bus operators at First Transit, Inc. overwhelmingly ratified a new three-year contract after a two-week strike, achieving wage increases and improved health coverage.

The operators went on strike to protest unfair nego-

tiating tactics, inadequate pay levels and improper health care contributions. Two-thirds of the members voted to approve the contract.

#### A Strong Message

“This contract serves as a message to First Transit and to city

leaders who create tiers of compensation among workers who do the same jobs,” said Rick Middleton, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 572 in Carson, California. “Our members will no longer accept substandard treatment, and we’ll be right back at the negotiating table to ensure

the fight for fairness continues in the future.”

The Teamsters’ strike at First Transit affected tens of thousands of commuters in Los Angeles County by shutting down 12 of the Metro Transit Authority’s (MTA) routes. Local 572 appreciated the patience and support of community members during the strike.

#### Contract Highlights

Highlights of the contract include:

- Retroactive pay for all members dating back to July 1, 2003;
- Wage increases in every year; and
- A three percent increase in company contributions to health care coverage.

Health care will remain a major issue for bus operators. The workers negotiated increases into this agreement but plan to be back at the table to press for more increases in two short years.



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# Thanks for the Memories

## Local 272 Retiree Turns 103

The Teamsters is proud to celebrate its 100th Anniversary this year. But, before there was a Teamsters Union, there was Joe Nero. Nero, a longtime member of Local 272 in New York City, celebrated his 103rd birthday on October 15, 2002.

“I guess you could say I’ve been around this ol’ world about four times by now,” Nero said. “I’ve seen a lot, some bad, but mostly good. If you just gonna moan and look for troubles you might as well just turn your key in.”



Nero left his Dallas, Texas home in 1932 and went to New York City. He made one really good friend who kept after Nero to join him as a mechanic in a car service

garage and become a Teamster.

“He said being in the union would make a difference,” Nero said. “We were the best of friends, so I took his advice.

We worked together and remained friends our whole lives.”

### The Good Life

Nero recalled that some people did not like the fact that his friend was white. But he didn’t listen.

“Friendship is a gift from God and no one takes it away,” Nero said.

Nero became and remained the top mechanic in the shop until his retirement in 1971.

Nero relishes his old age and the wisdom it provides. And he has lots of stories from his days as a Teamster. One thing that is clear in all of his memories is his pride and love for his union.

“The Teamsters did me right and gave me a good life. Those men became my family’s family if you know what I mean,” Nero said. “Being in the union was the difference between a good life and a tough one. It still is.”

# Food Fight

## Teamsters Support UFCW Grocery Strike

When 90,000 grocery workers belonging to the United Food and Commercial Workers Union—more than 70,000 in Southern California alone—walked off the job over health care issues, the Teamsters Union stood with them.

In the Los Angeles area, nearly 7,000 Teamster drivers and warehouse workers went out on strike in support of the UFCW, ceasing deliveries to Albertsons, Ralphs and Vons.

“This isn’t just about getting a fair contract for these workers, it’s about union solidarity,” said Jim Santangelo, President of Joint Council 42 in El Monte, California. “We have to make these corporations understand that we will not stand idly by while the lives of workers are being destroyed.”

### Holding the Line for Health Care

UFCW members across the country were forced to go on strike to protect their families’ livelihoods, save their benefits and ensure affordable health care coverage for the next generation of workers. Trade unionists see the struggle as a watershed attempt



PHOTOGRAPHY AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

to shift responsibility for health care from employers to workers, a maneuver that ultimately may affect all workers, union and nonunion alike.

With the Teamsters’ support, the AFL-CIO has established a national “Hold the Line for Health Care” strike fund, and is mobilizing state federations and central labor councils to support the grocery workers.



## Hawaiian Punch

### Strike Unifies Local, Nets Five-Year Contract

After their contract expired, bus operators, mechanics and clerical staff who work at Oahu Transit Services (OTS) wondered how long it would take to get a fair contract.

After management refused to bargain in good faith, 1,382 Teamster members decided to go on strike to protest company proposals to cut bus service and benefits, and to freeze wages.

“This strike and contract agreement was about our pasts and our futures,” said Mel Kahele, President of Teamsters Local 996 in Honolulu. “In the recent past our members helped establish Oahu’s transit system as the number-one rated system in America and because of that they deserved a contract which secured their families’ futures.”

The striking workers exemplified Hawaiian beliefs in unity, pride, community and family from the very beginning of the strike. In authorizing the strike, 1,144 voted to strike.



Only 51 voted “no”.

#### Ohana Rules All

“In Hawaii, ‘Ohana’ means family and we believe very

deeply in maintaining and strengthening those bonds between our family members, our fellow citizens and our union brothers and sisters,” said Yvette Ito, a 10-year Teamster and mechanic for the OTS.

“I think it was important for Teamster members to see that this strike wasn’t about one issue or one person, it was for the future of everyone,” added Ron Kozuma, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 996.

Throughout negotiations, OTS officials offered differing reasons for the impasse in

**“In the recent past our members helped establish Oahu’s transit system as the number-one rated system in America and because of that they deserved a contract which secured their families’ futures.”**

— MEL KAHELE, LOCAL 996 PRESIDENT, HONOLULU

bargaining. Honolulu Mayor Jeremy Harris did little to resolve the strike by echoing management’s false claims, all while claiming neutrality.

#### International Support

“These workers were getting tag teamed and when that occurs it’s important that the International get involved in any way it can,” said Jim Santangelo, President of Teamsters Joint Council 42. “The resolve these folks showed during the month of this strike is a lesson for us all.”

Following a successful rally at the State Capitol that boosted momentum, the Teamsters approved a tentative agreement and ratified the contract by a 9 to 1 margin.

Highlights of the contract include:

- No layoffs or cutbacks of employees;
- Maintenance of health and welfare benefits;
- Lowering the early retirement ‘bridge’ to age 59, allowing members to retire early and maintain their current levels of health care; and
- Wage increases of \$1.15 and pension increases of \$0.60.



# No-Trade Cause

## Thousands Gather to Say 'No Way to FTAA'

When trade ministers from 34 countries met in Miami in November to discuss the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), the Teamsters made sure the voice of labor was heard by big business.

A week before the trade talks began, more than 1,400 Florida Teamsters rallied against the FTAA, arguing that it would cost more American jobs, trample labor rights and hurt the environment.

The proposed FTAA would expand the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to every country in

the Western Hemisphere except Cuba. Drafts of the FTAA do not include enforcement mechanisms for labor rights. Like NAFTA, the FTAA will continue to allow companies to get away with violating labor rights as a way to keep production costs low. Governments will continue to use lax labor standards and non-enforcement of labor laws to lure investment to their countries.

### Not Going to Take It

"NAFTA has already cost more than 750,000 U.S. jobs," Mike Scott, President of Local 769 in Miami, told the crowd. "That



includes more than 27,000 lost jobs in Florida. NAFTA involves three countries versus 34 in FTAA. The impact from lost jobs will be tenfold."

During the talks a week later, the Teamsters were a visible presence outside the meeting site, and served as marshals during a protest march.

During the rally, the Rev. James Orange, a civil rights and labor rights activist who marched with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., fired up the crowd. He led the throng in an anti-FTAA cheer: "I'm fired up. I'm fed up. I'm used up. I'm tired up. And I ain't going to take it no more."

## THE TEAMSTER STORE IS OPEN

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or call 1-800-272-5120**





## Arbitrator Melts Kraft's Cheesy Ploy

### Local 791 Wins Back Superior Health Plan for Its Members

**A** cheesy ploy by Kraft to cut back on Teamster members' health benefits has backfired on the company.

An arbitrator recently ordered Kraft to reinstate a popular health plan and reimburse Teamsters from Local 791 in Rochester, New York for any out-of-pocket costs they incurred since January 1, 2003 when the company suspended the plan.

"I am thrilled about the arbitrator's decision," said Paul Markwitz, President of Local 791. "The workers have started to get reimbursed for any out-of-pocket expenses they paid out and they now have the medical plan that they deserve."

Although Kraft claimed that a 25 percent increase in premiums by Preferred Care HMO prompted the action, Local 791 determined that the increase locally was only about a third of that figure. Local 791 challenged the change and had been awaiting the arbitrator's ruling.

### Fighting For What's Right

Kraft will have to reimburse an estimated \$120,000 to \$550,000 to the workers who paid out-of-pocket costs. That includes workers like Bill Dubois—a 26-year employee of Kraft.

"I had to pay \$488 after Kraft changed plans," Dubois said. "If the old plan had been in place, it would have cost \$15. I want to thank Local 791 for fighting on our behalf. We worked hard to negotiate the Preferred Care plan and the company had no right getting rid of it."

Upon receiving the arbitrator's decision, Local 791 was able to negotiate extending the Preferred Care plan through 2004 while negotiations were underway for a new contract. At press time, negotiations were continuing.

Local 791 represents 475 production workers who make Cool Whip and Lunchables products.

"We won this battle because our members were united," added John Emrich, a Local 791 business agent. "The company tried to cut benefits at our members' expense, but the workers stood up and let their voices be heard."



## Gamble Pays Off

### Detroit Casino Workers Win Contract

**K**andace Crenshaw received a windfall at a Detroit casino—but it wasn't at the blackjack table. It was at the negotiating table.

Crenshaw is a phone operator at the Greektown Casino and a member of Local 372 in Detroit. Teamsters at three casinos in the area ratified a new four-year agreement in early November. Local 372 represents approximately 370 workers including valets, telephone operators, warehouse workers and coat check attendants at the Greektown, MGM and Motor City casinos.

In the contract, Teamsters received a \$2,000 ratification bonus in the first year of the contract.

"I used my bonus to go Christmas shopping," Crenshaw said. "It's a great contract and I'm glad we came to an agreement, but we were all ready to strike if it came to that."

### Providing Security

"We had months of talks and plenty of long, late negotiations," said Jim St. Louis, business agent for the casino workers.

The tough negotiating

paid off for the workers. In addition to the ratification bonus, workers got a second-year wage increase of 2.5 percent plus a \$500 bonus; a third-year wage increase of three percent or 40 cents, whichever is greater; and a fourth-year wage increase of four percent or 50 cents, whichever is greater.

"The gains that were achieved by the negotiating committee will ensure that our members can continue to provide for their families," said Veronica Stephenson, Local 372's Recording Secretary. "It's not just the wages but everything else that really provides for the members."

"There were a lot of great improvements in the contract," said Rhonda Stewart, a valet at the MGM Casino. "We maintained our health benefits with no increased cost and we got a new 401(k) program with company contributions. I'm going to start mine immediately."

Crenshaw said the casino also has a great childcare program for workers and the contract ensured that it would still be in place.

"I take advantage of the childcare program. It helps quite a bit," she said.

# Honoring Leaders

## Women's Conference Slated for March 26-28

The 2004 Women's Conference will honor the successes of Teamster women and their emerging role as leaders across North America.

Building on the success of the last several conferences, hundreds of dedicated Teamsters are expected at the 2004 sessions—which include workshops, exhibits, receptions and other events.

The 2004 conference will be held from March 26-28 in Orlando. Reservations must be made by February 20, 2004.

“Our focus this year will be on the achievements of Teamster women,” said Cheryl Johnson, Teamsters Director of Human Rights. “So many determined Teamster women have worked their way up through the ranks—whether it's at work or within their local. We're going to honor these women at the next conference.”

*To register for the conference or for more information, please visit [www.teamster.org/hrc/women/intro.htm](http://www.teamster.org/hrc/women/intro.htm)*



# TEAMStar

## Annual Open Enrollment January 1 – February 29, 2004

During this period, Medicare-eligible Teamster retirees age 65 or older, their spouses and surviving spouses are guaranteed acceptance with no waiting periods regardless of any preexisting health conditions!

Here are some service features you'll appreciate:

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- **Freedom of choice** — No provider list and no referral process to see a specialist.

**We are also happy to announce that a new high deductible plan has been added to the TEAMStar Retiree Health Plan for 2004 in most states. This addition enhances your ability to choose a plan that meets your individual needs!**

If you enroll after February 29, 2004, you will need to qualify by answering the health questions on the application and certain waiting periods may apply. Retirees will receive a TEAMStar information packet in the mail in early January.

**For additional information, call 1-800-808-3239  
or visit our website at [www.teamstar.com](http://www.teamstar.com)**

RAE61106

# Clean





## CHICAGO WASTE HAULERS WIN NINE-DAY STRIKE

**R**ob Lawrence slogs through the harsh Chicago elements on a daily basis. As a waste hauler, he works in 100-degree weather during the summer and wind chills of 40-below in the dead of winter while keeping the city one of the cleanest in North America.

In addition to harsh weather, Lawrence deals with rats, maggots, sacks of excrement and thousands of other pieces of refuse. As if all these impediments weren't enough, Lawrence and 3,300 of his coworkers recently confronted another familiar hazard of the waste industry — unfair employers.



## Health Scare

### Waste Haulers Value Health Plans on Dangerous Job

Everyone knows that police officers and fire fighters face job-related dangers on a daily basis. Most people don't know about the dangers that garbage collectors face.

Solid waste haulers rank third on the list of riskiest jobs in the United States, according to a study by the Florida Center for Solid and Hazardous Waste Management and the University of Miami.

"We're constantly getting hit, banged, scratched, tripped, falling down and tearing muscles," said Rick Morris, a waste hauler from Local 731. "It's a grueling job and taking care of your body is important."

#### Constant Danger

The study reports an average of 90 deaths annually per 100,000 waste workers. Commercial fishing and timber cutting are the only professions more dangerous.

According to the study, the injury rate for waste workers is staggering. Collectors are injured five to seven times more than the average worker. Most of those are back injuries and lacerations.

Across the country, waste workers are not the only ones whose health care plans are at risk. Companies across the board are attempting to take away health benefits. That these Teamsters retained theirs in the face of such opposition is a testament to their unity and strength.

"It's not only about us and our health care," Morris said. "A lot of us have families and we need our health care plans to take care of them."

As the expiration of a five-year agreement approached, the 3,300 Teamsters—members of Locals 301 and 731—expected a fair contract. In 70 years of bargaining, they had never experienced a work stoppage.

But after three months at the bargaining table, the Chicagoland Refuse Haulers Association (CRHA) offered Teamster workers 65 cents over five years to cover wages, health care and pensions—an offer that amounted to a wage freeze and out-of-pocket health expenses for members. Workers found the offer more repulsive than the garbage they handle.

"We live on Tylenol and Aleve," said Lawrence, a 25-year veteran of Arc Disposal in Chicago. "And the company wanted to take away our health benefits. It's ridiculous."

"Health benefits are definitely one of the most important aspects of employment for these workers," said Terry Hancock, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 731. "It's unconscionable what these companies wanted to do."

Luckily, Lawrence and his co-workers are Teamsters—and they wouldn't back down from this fight. On September 27, 2,500 Teamsters attended a rally at Local 731 where they overwhelmingly voted to strike. On October 1, waste and refuse haulers from Locals 731 and 301 went on strike to win a fair contract and justice for the men and women who keep the Chicagoland area clean.

#### Forced Out, Locked Out

More than eight million Chicagoland residents and businesses were affected as 85 strike lines immediately went up in the five counties serviced by the Teamsters. The CRHA responded by locking the workers out and figured that political and community pressure would cause the workers and the strike to crumble. Mayor Richard Daley threatened to sue the union and the companies in order to stop the build-up of garbage that he termed, "a public health hazard."

"During the strike, there was a lot of talk about how the garbage piling up was a threat to public health—but what about our health? We're at risk every day on the job," Lawrence said.

The CRHA—which represents 16 of the largest waste removal companies in the region—refused to back down off its offer that would cut health benefits on workers who have one of the most dangerous jobs in North America. After five days on strike, the Teamsters received a last, best and final offer from CRHA after the association rejected the union's request for federal mediation. In accordance with the Teamsters Constitution, a last, best and final offer must be taken to the membership for a vote. Teamster waste haulers responded by rejecting the offer by an overwhelming 92 percent margin.



### First Work Stoppage

Business agents and stewards worked tirelessly—sometimes working for 36 straight hours—on the picket lines. They effectively delivered information to the strikers, handled conflicts and helped keep morale up while the members stood strong. It worked. Not a single Teamster crossed the picket line during the nine-day strike.

“Most of our people had never been on strike before and they held it together in a way like I’ve never seen,” said Bill Logan, Director of Organizing for Local 731. “The solidarity these Teamsters displayed while on the strike line was extraordinary.”

“I didn’t think so many people would turn out on the strike line—but they did,” said John Glorioso of BFI in Melrose Park. “I got to know my coworkers a lot better than I ever did before. It was great.”

And it wasn’t only Teamster waste workers supporting their coworkers on the picket line. The constant peal of car horns from passing motorists gave strikers confidence that the community remained firmly in their corner. Teamsters from other industries came out and held signs with the striking workers. Neighboring restaurants showed their support by bringing the strikers food.

“We had three barrels burning 24 hours a day,” said Lawrence. “We ate well out there, too. You could see manage-

*During the strike, there was a lot of talk about how the garbage piling up was a threat to public health—but what about our health? We’re at risk every day on the job.*

—ROB LAWRENCE, LOCAL 731





*Health benefits are definitely one of the most important aspects of employment for these workers. It's unconscionable what these companies wanted to do.*

— TERRY HANCOCK, LOCAL 731 SECRETARY-TREASURER

ment looking out at us from the office and I think it bothered them that we were having fun.”

### **\$90,000 Question**

Community support is key in any work stoppage, but even more so when garbage is piling up in people’s yards. Management tried to swing public opinion in its favor with a series of bald-faced lies.

The chief spokesman for the CRHA repeatedly lied to the media about how much the Teamsters were earning. His estimate that the waste haulers were making more than \$90,000 per year was so inaccurate it would make an Enron accountant blush.

The CRHA created the number by using a 50-hour week, adding in the cost

of health, welfare and pensions—and adding an additional 10 hours of benefits at time-and-a-half that would never be paid. They tacked on an additional 20 percent for good measure but were never able to explain how it got there.

“At times, it seemed like the media was getting their information from the company rather than us, but it didn’t take long for that to change,” said Rick Morris, a Teamster at Waste Management Metro in Cicero.

“The truth was, these workers made an average of \$43,000 a year. All we were seeking to do was keep a solid, middle-class wage for these workers,” said Bill Woldman, President of Local 731.

In the end, the media helped the Teamster strikers. Reporters acknowledged they didn’t want to do the job and understood

and explained how difficult a job it is. The media also understood they were being lied to by the CRHA.

“Basically, the Teamsters were the ones who consistently told the truth to the media so our credibility was intact,” Woldman said. “The same can’t be said for the Association and their spokesman.”

With unity on the picket line, support from the community and a media that was getting a firmer grasp of the issues and the truth, management began to buckle.

### **Richest Contract Ever**

An agreement was reached after nine days on strike and marathon negotiating sessions between the union and association representatives.

“Bottom line: We were ready to engage in battle. The companies were not,” said Hancock. “The fact that we were prepared and able to go the distance forced them to give us the richest contract ever negotiated in this industry.”

In the end, the Teamsters won \$7.95 to cover wages, pensions and benefits over the life of the contract—as opposed to the 65 cents the company originally offered.

“It is truly fulfilling to secure nearly all



# Solidarity Spurs Organizing

## Strike Inspires U.S. Waste Haulers

The nine-day strike by Chicago waste workers was the focal point for solidarity among waste locals nationwide.

The International's Organizing Department spread word to all Teamsters in the waste industry via an "Organizing Waste Watch" fax. Locals and organizers were asked to distribute a button to all waste workers to show support for the striking Chicagoans and to remind the waste companies that a fight with one is a fight with all.

"Teamster waste haulers can all be bolder, more powerful and stronger if we take on management as a group," said Jeff Farmer, Director of the International's Organizing Department.

### Show of Strength

Across the country, union and nonunion waste workers were wearing buttons with the word "Chicago" superimposed over the outline of a garbage truck. The orders for the solidarity buttons were so overwhelming, thousands more had to be rushed into production. Some of those wearing the buttons included:

- Unorganized Allied Waste workers in Atlanta and Phoenix wearing them during their organizing campaign;
- Newly-organized BFI workers in Huntington, West Virginia who have been without a contract for six months; and
- Workers in San Jose, California who recently organized with Local 350 under a card-check agreement.



### The Best Thing

Shortly after Locals 731 and 301 declared victory in the Chicago strike, the Teamsters helped workers at two companies fight for and win representation.

First, 76 drivers at NorCal Waste Services in Los Angeles walked off the job on October 15 demanding that the company recognize Local 396 as their bargaining representative. The strikers completely shut down NorCal's sole Southern California operation. After a six-day strike, the workers won voluntary recognition by the company.

Second, BFI workers in San Carlos, California claimed victory on October 28 when 253 employees overwhelmingly voted for Teamster representation by Local 350.

"This proves that BFI can be beaten," said Dave Thomas, a BFI worker from Atlanta. "It means we can win here too."

Teamster strikers from Chicago have some advice for any unorganized waste workers: Organize!

"The companies are just millionaires wanting to be billionaires on our sweat. We're all just a number to them," said Rob Lawrence, a Local 731 member. "Going with the Teamsters is the best thing waste workers can do for themselves. There's no chance in the world this job would be as good without them."

of your bargaining objectives in contract negotiations," said Bob Barnes, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 301. "The multi-local agreement is extremely important not only for these workers but to the industry because it sets wage and benefit rates in most of the Chicago area."

Some highlights of the five-year agreement include:

- Maintenance of health and welfare benefits with no out-of-pocket costs to members;
- Pension security;
- Wage increases of 22.4 percent over the life of the contract; and
- Improvements in subcontracting language.

"Before the contract was settled, I was worried about what it might look like in the end," Morris said. "I was completely won over by it, though. Not just me, either. I've heard plenty of my coworkers talk about how great it is."

"With the way other employers are chopping up health benefits, that we managed to maintain ours completely is great," Lawrence said. "That alone would make it a great contract—but look at everything else we got."

When the contract was presented to the members, they overwhelmingly chose to accept the offer by a vote of 1,540 to 373.

"The Teamsters give us a voice, represent us and are there if any of us has the slightest concern about something wrong at work," said Morris. "The Teamsters are like family—they take care of us when we need it."





# Energized and Mobilized

## Members Get Involved in 2004 Elections

“President Gephardt.”

Go ahead and say it out loud. Sounds pretty good, right? Imagine a Gephardt administration and what it would mean to Teamsters and the labor movement. American families wouldn't have to wonder where the President stands on issues that affect working people. For decades, nobody has championed the rights of union members like Dick Gephardt.

In addition to the Gephardt campaign, the Teamsters are getting involved in all aspects of the 2004 elections. Whether working to elect pro-worker candidates for Congress in state and national races, defeat anti-worker legislation or promoting a fellow Teamster for public office, members are playing an enormous role in this year's November election push. In a nationwide grassroots effort, Teamsters are educating



# Primary Importance

## Joint Councils Energize Iowa, New Hampshire, Michigan

It's not just rank-and-file members getting geared up for the 2004 elections. Every aspect of the union is involved—from the top down. This includes Joint Councils.

The current effort by Joint Council 45 in Iowa has many different aspects, but its hardest push right now is to get members involved in Iowa's January 2004 caucus—the first in the nation. They are currently signing Teamsters up to vote and will provide them with caucus training.

"January 19 is the day this all comes together in a victory for Gephardt," said Jim Hoffa, Teamsters General President, on a recent trip to Des Moines. "The eyes of America are on Iowa."

While Iowa has the first caucus in the nation, the first primary takes place on January 27 in New Hampshire. Joint Council 10 covers many New England states—including New Hampshire—and Colleen Brady, Joint Council 10's Legislative and Political Director, has played a large part in formulating their plan.

### Making a Difference

"The Teamsters have a tremendous opportunity to make a critical difference in this Presidential race," Brady said. "It's great that the Teamsters Union has taken such a high-profile position in the 2004 presidential campaign."

The Joint Council 10 plan involves voter registration and showing members how to change their party affiliation to "Democrat" so they can vote in the primary. Literature drops, phone banks, steward trainings, a direct mail program, worksite visits and other activities are also important aspects of the New Hampshire campaign.

With its primary on February 7, Michigan is another important state. Bill Black, Joint Council 43's Legislative and DRIVE Director, is implementing plans that include education and voter registration.

"We'll run an aggressive program to register members to vote," Black said. "And educating the members on how to vote by mail. We're also having members talk to other members about the issues and we're doing mailings."

Every Joint Council has something planned for the upcoming election and they all require Teamster volunteers. Get in touch with your local union to find out what you can do.



themselves on the issues and getting involved in the political process.

"I'm getting involved this year because I see how politics are affecting me now more than ever. The issues I care about are whatever is right for working families—fair labor, trade issues and things that affect workers," said Greg Hearn, a Local 238 member in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. "If there was ever a time to get involved, it is right now."

His coworker, Doug Squires, feels the same way.

"I've never been this involved before. But then, I've never felt this way about a candidate," Squires said. "It's incredibly important for Teamsters to get involved and we can help out in lots of ways—whether it's volunteering our time, money or both."

At a recent campaign stop in Iowa, Gephardt took the stage with Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa in an auditorium that was overflowing with rank-and-file Teamsters. Members across the country are realizing that if change is going to be made, it has to start with our nation's most important resource—working people.

### A Union President

"For the last several years, the interests of big business have been served by the President. It's time working families and unions had a President," said Gephardt at the Des Moines rally.

Gephardt—the son of a Teamster milk truck driver—also discussed what his priorities would be when he gets to the Oval





Office. On every issue from trade to the minimum wage to the right to organize, Gephardt is the candidate with the record of looking out for workers and labor unions.

“How many more Americans have to lose their jobs before George Bush loses his?” Gephardt asked the crowd. “My plan is the only one that includes everyone and I won’t get amnesia about who helped me get to the White House. I won’t forget because I believe in organized labor. I believe in my heart that labor unions are the reason America is great. We can make this a better country than it has ever been.”

Gephardt also talked about the importance of the grassroots involvement by the

**“I’ve never been this involved before. But then, I’ve never felt this way about a candidate. It’s incredibly important for Teamsters to get involved and we can help out in lots of ways—whether it’s volunteering our time, money or both.”**

**—DOUG SQUIRES, LOCAL 238**





Teamsters in attendance.

“The meaning of what you all are doing is enormous and we’re going to beat George Bush because of your efforts,” Gephardt said. “When I got the Teamsters endorsement, I met with a lot of you and when I looked out into the crowd of Teamsters, I saw the face of my father.”

### Why Get Involved?

“We’ve got a candidate like we’ve never had before. Here is someone who doesn’t have to look at the polls to figure out what he believes in,” Hoffa said.

The Teamsters will be engaged in grassroots efforts to unseat every anti-labor politician working on Capitol Hill and in every statehouse in the country.

Members will also be campaigning for politicians currently in office who are friendly to the Teamsters’ cause.

In our nation’s history, the greatest social changes have been accomplished at the grassroots level—with help from the Teamsters.

Teamster members were at the forefront of the civil rights and women’s rights movements through nationwide, member-to-member efforts. Rank-and-file activism has also been the key to electing everyone from city council members and school board officials to governors and Presidents.

The all-out Teamster effort in the upcoming Democratic presidential primaries and caucuses will be utilizing the same grassroots energy as in the past. Rank-and-file Teamsters are already organizing and mobilizing members to spread the Gephardt message. This is being done in a variety of ways, includ-

## Taking Charge

### Teamsters Electing Teamsters

**M**ike Giarrusso, a Local 72 member from New York, was on a picket line a few months ago talking to other strikers. A friend approached him on the line and told him he should run to be a council member in the town of Salina in Upstate New York.

“I just laughed at him,” Giarrusso said. “I never saw myself as a politician. I still don’t. I’m just a working stiff.”

At most, he saw himself as a labor activist and Teamster who works for the New York State Thruway Authority as a construction equipment operator. But now he is also an elected council member.

“That night, I went home and told my wife about the suggestion. She said, ‘It’s not a bad idea.’ With that, I was in it,” he said. “I owe a lot of my win to her. To her and the Teamsters.”

A Teamster can have no better friend holding an elected office than a fellow Teamster.

### Union Supporters

There are Teamsters holding public office all over the country and in just about every position imaginable. There are mayors and city council members, township clerks and village trustees, state house representatives and school board members.

In the last statewide election in Missouri, Local 688 in St. Louis helped elect Clint Zweifel as a state representative. Zweifel, in addition to his legislative duties, is the Education and Research Director for Local 688.

“The number one reason why I was elected to this position was the Teamsters that were supporting me, working hard, volunteering their personal time, going door-to-door, making phone calls and contributing money to my campaign,” he said. “From fellow Teamsters, I had contributions as small as \$5 and as large as \$300 from individual members and every bit helped.”

### Advocates for Working Families

The biggest reason to have Teamster brothers and sisters in public office is because nobody understands the needs of working families better than union members.

“Union workers have a better understanding of what workers’ needs and concerns are,” said Mike Meade, a town council member who was just elected to his third term in Farmington, Connecticut. Meade is also a UPS driver and member of Local 671.

If there is one thing better than having a fellow Teamster in office, it is having many.

“Running for office is a mind boggling undertaking but if we are to ever have the voice of labor truly listened to, we must do it from within,” Giarrusso said. “I encourage any of my brothers and sisters who are thinking of entering politics to do it and know that they will not stand alone because the International Brotherhood of Teamsters is a family.”

ing phone banking, caucus training, caucus sign-ups and—perhaps the most important aspect—person-to-person communication.

“There is nothing more effective than members talking to members,” said Bill Black, the Legislative and DRIVE Director for Joint Council 43 in Michigan.

### An Aggressive Campaign

The Michigan Teamsters were one of the driving forces behind Jennifer Granholm’s election as Governor of Michigan in 2002. The grassroots effort of Michigan Teamsters during her campaign bolstered the reputation of the Teamsters Union as a major political player in the state. Black said Joint Council 43 would be using some of the same tactics from the Granholm campaign to ensure that Gephardt is the Democratic nominee.

“You can’t sit there and just do mailings and endorsements,” he said. “You have to educate the members. You have to have a political coordinator at each local and they have to go to work sites and handbill. It has to be an aggressive campaign.”

“Member-to-member communication works the best,” said Bruce Harvey, political director of Local 406 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. “It’s always better getting your information from someone you know and trust. We need to step up to the plate and be part of this.”

A two-day conference in Des Moines provided local union political coordinators with instruction on how to get members

interested in the political process. Workshops on state and federal legislation, trade and the 2004 election were well attended and several guests made appearances—including Iowa Governor Thomas Vilsack, Lt. Governor Sally Pederson and Hoffa.

“I’ve never attended one of these coordinator’s meetings before but I need to know what to tell my members,” said Ferline Buie, President of Local 922 in Washington, D.C. “It’s important to make the members see how crucial it is that Gephardt and other pro-worker candidates get our support and, at this meeting, I’m learning how to do that.”

Many Teamsters who are part of the current political fight say the biggest hurdle in the next election can be overcome fairly easily. The hurdle? Voter apathy.

“If you know Gephardt’s record on labor issues you’ll know why I’m supporting him,” said Joyce Reiling, a member of Local 90 in Des Moines. “The most important part is educating members on the issues. If they know how all this affects them, they’ll get involved and they’ll vote.”

Percentage-wise, labor turns out twice the number of voters as the non-union population. But there is always more work that can be done.

“My coworkers will get involved if they know the issues. There is a direct connection between that and voting,” said Paul Hoffman, a rank-and-file Teamster from Local 238 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. “Working Americans are under attack—it’s time to fight back.”

### BUSH’S WORKER SCORECARD

FAIR TRADE	F
OVERTIME	F
ERGONOMICS	F
MEDICARE	F
SOCIAL SECURITY	F
MINIMUM WAGE	F
HEALTH CARE	F

## The Bush Report Card

When it comes to issues important to America’s working families, George W. Bush simply doesn’t make the grade. The destructive elements of his policies include:

- ▶ Elimination of overtime and the 40-hour workweek;
- ▶ Killing the OSHA ergonomics standard that took 10 years to design;
- ▶ Ignoring worker rights and the environment in trade deals;
- ▶ Opening the U.S. border to unregulated trucks from Mexico;
- ▶ Using Taft-Hartley to intervene in port negotiations;
- ▶ Burdening labor with up to \$1 billion annually in new reporting rules;
- ▶ Rescinding strict reporting requirements for union-busting consultants and attorneys;
- ▶ Repealing worker protection and labor-management relations rules;
- ▶ Big tax breaks to the wealthy, peanuts to workers; and
- ▶ Wants to weaken and privatize Medicare and Social Security.



# Smooth Ride

## Maryland's Yellow Bus Workers Win Justice

**W**orkers at Yellow Transportation in Maryland have long been fed up with the way they've been treated on the job.

"I've been an attendant for eight years and I'm still not even making \$8 an hour," said Virginia Boyd, a bus attendant and member of Local 570 in Baltimore. "I'm dealing with people with behavioral problems, not school kids. I've been hit in my face. My eyeglasses have been broken. This is hazardous duty."

Boyd noted that her job includes no sick days, vacation days or personal days. But Boyd and nearly 500 fellow drivers and attendants are fighting back by joining the Teamsters.

By an 85-27 vote, Local 570 gained 194 members at the Yellow's Jessup/Savage facility,

then nearly 300 workers in Baltimore voted to join the union with only 11 workers voting "no." The campaigns benefited from assistance from the Teamsters Organizing Department and Joint Council 62.

"We needed some serious help organizing Yellow," said Nina Patterson, a member of Local 355 in Baltimore. "We wanted respect on the job, but we were getting a hard time from management."

### Outrageous Health Care Costs

Yellow Transportation is a company well-positioned to do right by its workers. It provides transit service to some 7 million passengers annually and 27,000 customers daily. Yet the company's workforce of more than 1,500 is rife with discontent.

"There's a lot of things that haven't

gotten resolved," said Ivory Scott, a member of Local 355 who drives both vans and cars. "The manifest, the workload, the condition of the vehicles; these are problems that have frustrated everybody."

Local 570 Organizer Mo Jackson said that poor pensions and "outrageous" health insurance costs were among the factors contributing to the substantial vote margins.

"These workers have been paying a premium between \$200 and \$500 every two

weeks," he said. "A lot have had to choose not to get health coverage because they can't afford it."

Now that they have union representation, Yellow workers are looking forward to having a greater say in their workplace.

"Management has no employees participating in decisions," said James Butler, a member of Local 570. "We want the company to succeed. We think it will work better for everyone with our input."



## LOCAL 350

### BFI

Defying management's expectations, 253 workers at BFI's San Carlos, California facility voted overwhelmingly for Teamsters representation.

Weeks before the 134-68 vote, the International Union's Organizing Department—at the request of Local 350—dispatched seven organizers to help workers fend off the company's union-busting tactics. They were assisted by volunteer organizers from several locals, including workers who earlier in the week won a strike for recognition at NorCal Waste Services in Los Angeles.

## LOCAL 396

### NorCal Waste Services

Seventy-six employees of NorCal Waste Services in Los Angeles won voluntary recognition with Local 396 in the wake of a six-day strike.

More than 80 percent of the workers had walked off the job because they said the company was attempting to delay a National Labor Relations Board representation election.

"Instead of months of legal maneuvers and delays, we get some dignity and respect and the chance to sit down and bargain a contract," said NorCal worker J.J. Anguiano.

## LOCAL 728

### Iron Mountain

Courier and shuttle drivers seeking dignity on the job and a livable wage at Iron Mountain in Atlanta voted 26-6 to join Local 728 in Atlanta.

"We are thankful for the Teamsters," said driver Vince Jenkins. "They met with us weekly, developed a battle plan for us, and asked us to have the courage to follow their lead. We did that, and now we have the opportunity for a brighter future, at work and at home."

## LOCAL 695

### Pepsi-Cola

Thirty full-time drivers and five part-time drivers at Pepsi-Cola's Windsor, Wisconsin distribution center voted to join Local 695 in Madison.

"The employer degraded the workers by calling them names and threatening that they could be replaced at any time," said Gene Gowy, a Local 695 business agent who coordinated the organizing campaign.

## LOCAL 483

### Oak Harbor Freight

Twenty-six line and city drivers at Oak Harbor Freight in Boise, Idaho voted 16-9 to join Local 483.

International Organizer Dean Modecker, along with International Representative Ed Bagwell and Local Organizer Mark Briggs, conducted an intensive house call campaign during the final week of the campaign.

"This victory is a good example of how, by coordinating efforts at all levels of our union, we are making great strides in organizing freight workers," said Ralph Taurone, International Vice President.

***"We are thankful for the Teamsters. Now we have the opportunity for a brighter future, at work and at home."***

— VINCE JENKINS, LOCAL 728

## LOCAL 81

### Ross Island Sand and Gravel

Twenty-nine concrete drivers at Ross Island Sand and Gravel in Portland, Oregon voted to join Local 81 by a vote of 23-3.

"These members deserve full credit for staying united throughout the organizing process," said Tom Strickland, the local's business representative.

## LOCAL 714

### Lake County, Calumet Park

Local 714 expanded the Teamsters reach in law enforcement with two recent organizing victories.

A unit of 19 sergeants in the Lake County, Illinois Sheriffs Department voted 13-2 to join the Chicago-area local. In addition, a group of 19 part-time police officers in Calumet Park, Illinois voted unanimously for Teamster representation.

## LOCAL 299

### ProLogistics

Nearly 70 drivers at ProLogistics, a freight company in Romulus, Michigan signed authorization cards to join Local 299 in Detroit.

The new Teamsters at ProLogistics haul freight for

the Ford Motor Company.

"There was tremendous support among the workers, and the organizing effort was well coordinated between Local 299, Joint Council 43 and the International Organizing Department," said Jim Parrinello, a Joint Council 43 organizer.

## LOCAL 851

### Swissport Cargo Services

By a margin of three-to-one, 110 cargo agents at Swissport Cargo Services at JFK Airport in New York voted to join Local 851.

"The company used anti-union tactics throughout the campaign, but we were right there each time with a comeback," said Ken Roper, Local 851's Recording Secretary.

## LOCAL 833

### Columbia Ready-Mix

Sixty drivers at Columbia Ready-Mix in Columbia, Missouri voted 39-19 to join Local 833.

The company put up an intensive fight, hiring union-busters and even calling spouses in order to intimidate workers.

"These drivers fought courageously to be treated with respect and dignity," said Mark Bruemmer, Local 833's Vice President.





# **The Health**

*Need For Universal Health Care Greater Than Ever*

# **Care Crisis**

**Over 90,000** supermarket workers went out on strike in California and four other states over proposed cuts to their medical benefits.

Two thousand Teamster transit workers in Los Angeles walked out over changes to their health insurance.

Sanitation workers in Chicago were forced to strike to protect their health insurance.

Workers at Verizon and the Big Three in Detroit agreed to contracts with small pay raises in order to retain their existing health plans with minimal co-pays.

As these examples show, the skyrocketing cost of health coverage is the biggest cause for negotiation breakdowns and strikes across America today, according to a labor expert at UCLA.

In fact, it is the key issue for all Americans. A recent study by the Kaiser Family Foundation found that more Americans are worried about being able to afford their health insurance than they are about terrorism, by 33 percent to 8 percent. An NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll in July 2003 found that health care costs ranked as American's top economic concern. It's no wonder, with 43 million Americans without health coverage.

Yet the Bush Administration continues to ignore the problem.

## Rising Costs

Looking ahead to 2004, the cost of monthly premiums is expected to increase by 12 percent. This will be the fifth year in a row with a double-digit percentage increase. Only five years ago, health premiums cost half as much as they do today. They are increasing faster than wage rates. And there's no end in sight.

The combination of rising health care costs and a stagnant economy is creating a viscous cycle for working people. In the face of the largest health benefit cost increases in a decade, employers are freezing wages and curtailing hiring. This undercuts economic growth.

In a recent survey conducted by the Michigan Manufacturers Association, 23 percent said they had reduced their workforce to offset health benefit cost increases, 19 percent had scaled back hiring because of the cost increases, and 39 percent

reported that they have reduced the level of health benefits coverage.

## Impacts on Employers and Workers

The ever-increasing cost of health coverage is placing enormous pressure on employers. They have faced a 75 percent increase in average premiums over

the last decade, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Even in good economic periods, employers would have a hard time dealing with these increases. And this is definitely not a boom period for the American economy.

Some employers are simply eliminating coverage altogether. Less than half (45 percent) of all workers have employer-

## Only five years ago, health premiums cost half as much as they do today

based insurance. A decade ago, two-thirds had work-based insurance, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Small businesses and their workers have been hit hard. Sixty-seven percent of all small businesses offered health insur-

ance in 2000. In 2002, that number was down to 61 percent.

However, the problem is spilling over into the nation's larger employers. In 2001, one-third of the nation's workers without insurance—9.6 million people—were employed by large companies, according to a recent study.

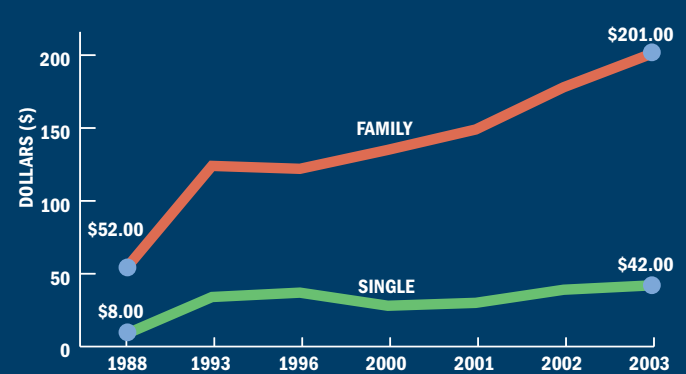
Some employers are making workers

pay more for or are dropping the more expensive types of coverage, like family plans.

The bosses are making the workers the victims. Employers are finding a variety of ways to shift the cost increases onto the

## Average Monthly Worker Contribution

FOR SINGLE AND FAMILY COVERAGE, 1998-2003



SOURCE: KAISER/HRET SURVEY OF EMPLOYER-SPONSORED HEALTH BENEFITS

## Wal-Mart: Undermining the System All By Itself

Could one company really escalate the health care crisis by itself? In the case of Wal-Mart, the answer is yes.

Wal-Mart is the largest private sector employer in the United States. It employs 1.1 million workers. Fewer than half of those workers are in the company's health plan. Nationally, almost two-thirds of employees at large firms have health coverage, according to a recent AFL-CIO study. At Wal-Mart, it's between 41 and 46 percent.

Wal-Mart pays its workers substandard wages and makes its plan prohibitively expensive. It also finds ways to exclude many of its employees from the plan.

Wal-Mart's working conditions are largely responsible for the 90,000 grocery workers currently out on strike. Supermarket employers are trying to cut costs in order to stay competitive with Wal-Mart.

Wal-Mart is one of the most profitable companies in the world. These profits come in part from paying workers substandard wages, providing no benefits and using contractors that hire illegal immigrants. Wal-Mart makes its profits by exploiting workers and communities all over the world. In the process, it's hurting all workers and wreaking havoc on our economy and health care system.

## Teamster Benefits Matter

Louie Nunez understands the importance of having Teamster benefits. Before he was a Teamster, Louie had some jobs that offered no benefits at all and others that had benefits but they cost a ton.

When he joined the Teamsters, all that changed. He has been a member of Local 202 in New York City for the last seven years. Louie is a Shop Steward at Bay Ridge Nissan where he preps cars, giving them a final clean up before they are sold.

“The jobs I had before this one were bad jobs. It was always a struggle to find ways to pay for my health care,” Nunez said. “Eight years ago, when I was just starting a family, my wife paid \$2,000 for dental work. I don’t know how we got by. In the last few years, I’ve had almost \$6,000 worth of dental work done and I paid nothing. It was all covered!”

Nunez and his wife, Wendy Ottenwalder, have two children, Chantelle and Crystal. Having a family makes him appreciate the benefits even more.

“When you look at what’s going on around us, you realize how important being a Teamster is. So many kids don’t get proper medical care because they have no insurance. People are earning the minimum wage. Being a Teamster means being part of a team. We are stronger together. Having the power of the Teamsters Union behind us and the protections of a Teamster contract are so important,” added Nunez.



backs of workers. Employers that pay for health benefits used to pay 75 percent of total costs. In the last five years, that number has dropped to 70 percent.

Workers are paying a larger share of their monthly premiums and are facing higher co-pays and increased deductibles.

## The percentage of companies with 200 or more workers that offer retiree health benefits fell from 66 percent in 1988 to 34 percent in 2002

The Kaiser study found that 65 percent of large employers increased the amount that employees pay for health insurance this year, and half plan to do so next year.

Out-of-pocket costs for workers have more than doubled since 1998. This year, workers spent an average of \$2,126 on health care. That number is expected to rise 22 percent to \$2,595 in 2004.

With real wages actually declining, higher health benefit costs for workers cut straight into income and purchasing power.

Retiree coverage is also being affected. They are being forced to pay more of their monthly premiums, higher co-pays and higher deductibles.

Some retiree plans are simply being dropped. The percentage of companies with 200 or more workers that offer retiree health benefits fell from 66 percent in 1988 to 34 percent in 2002, according to the Kaiser survey.

In the Kaiser survey of large companies offering retiree benefits, 9 percent reported

that they had eliminated retiree health coverage for active employees within the past two years. Forty percent reported that they had increased their retirees’ share of premiums, and 26 percent reported that they had increased the amount retirees pay for prescriptions.

The loss of retiree health benefits represents a looming crisis for workers. A male worker who retires at age 65 and dies at age 80 will need \$47,000 to cover medical costs if he has employer-sponsored retiree health benefits and \$116,000 without it, according to the Employee Benefits Research Institute. These costs do not include long-term nursing care.

Contracts negotiated over the coming years will largely determine if pension and retiree health benefits continue to exist as basic employee benefits for millions of U.S. workers.

## More and More Americans are Uninsured

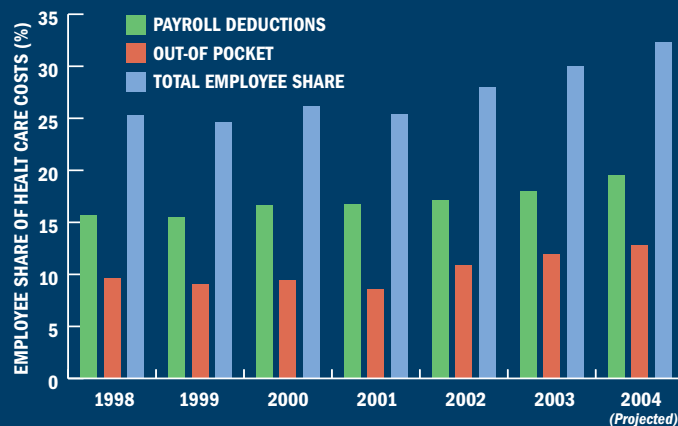
As costs continue to rise, employers and workers are having trouble keeping pace. According to Census Bureau statistics, 2.4 million more Americans went without health insurance in 2002 than in 2001. There are now 43.6 million Americans without health insurance, just over 15 percent of the population.

With numbers that large, health care is no longer just a problem for the poor. Many in the middle class are now struggling to keep their families covered.

The decline in those covered reflects higher unemployment, a larger number of employers that have dropped health care coverage, and a growing number of workers

## Picking Up More Than Their Share

Employees Share of the Cost Increases



SOURCE: KAISER/HRET SURVEY OF EMPLOYER-SPONSORED HEALTH BENEFITS



be a basic right for all Americans. Meeting such a basic need should not be forcing government budgets, companies and workers into the red.

In the past year alone, the proportion of workers with employer-based coverage who express a preference for a government-operated system jumped from 17 to 31 percent, according to an Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI) survey. Among all Americans, support for a government plan jumped from 25 to 36 percent in the past year.

Many Americans say health care is the most critical issue facing the nation today. Twenty percent say it is the top priority,

who decline coverage because they cannot afford to pay the required employee contributions.

In 2002 alone, 900,000 more Americans with full-time jobs lost their insurance. That brought us to a total of 19.9 million people with jobs that don't have insurance.

### Impact on Government

The 43.6 million Americans without insurance are not healthier than the rest of us; in fact they may have more health needs because they have limited access to health care.

So who pays for their care?

We all do.

The people without insurance wind up going to emergency rooms for care, or they go on Medicaid. Either way, taxpayers foot the bill.

Caring for the uninsured costs hospitals \$22 billion a year, a cost largely absorbed by the public.

As more and more Americans are forced onto Medicaid's rolls, the program's costs are rising, crippling budgets across the country. Even then, the number of people losing work-based coverage is outpacing that of people entering Medicaid.

With the economy stalling, tax receipts are down at the federal, state and local levels. Public officials at all levels are struggling to find ways to pay for public programs. Budgets are in the red all over the country and health care costs are a primary cause.

### What is the Solution?

The only real solution to this crisis is national health care. Health care should

## Changes in Your Future?

*Retiree health coverage changes planned within next three years*

Eliminate coverage for future retirees	22%
Increase retiree premiums	82%
Increase premiums for dependents	66%
Increase drug co-pays/co-insurance	85%

(SOURCE: HEWITT ASSOCIATES SURVEY OF 435 LARGE COMPANIES)

Gephardt's plan for universal health care will cover 97 percent of Americans. Under the Gephardt plan, all working families will have access to quality health care. Retirees, children and those that cannot afford care will be covered. It will provide tax incentives for companies that

## Union Members Doing Better, But Facing Tough Choices

**U**nion members are better off than the general public. Union members are more likely to have employer-based coverage to begin with. They also pay less for more comprehensive coverage. Finally, employers cannot make unilateral changes to their benefits. Everything must be negotiated.

Twenty-two percent of people with employer-based insurance have their entire monthly premiums paid for by their employers, according to the Department of Labor. For union members, that number almost doubles to 41 percent. For family coverage, 10 percent of all workers pay nothing, while 31 percent of union members pay nothing.

Benefits now account for 34.5 percent of total compensation for union workers, compared with 26.1 percent for nonunion workers, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Employer costs for health insurance for union workers average \$2.70 per hour or 9 percent of total compensation, compared with \$1.17 per hour or 5.6 percent of total compensation for nonunion workers.

The high cost of health care is forcing funds to run deficits. Union funds are being forced to choose between eliminating benefits and increasing out-of-pocket costs for members. Most are unwilling to cut the benefits that members have fought so hard to win, so they are asking members to pay more for those benefits. The hope is that this is a temporary, short-term band-aid that will protect the funds and members' benefits for years to come.

according to the EBRI survey.

The problem is too large to solve at the bargaining table. Union members have great benefits and strong protections, but the crisis is undermining those gains.

"The federal government must step in and address this situation. Health care is shaping up to be a central issue in the 2004 presidential election. The Teamsters Union has interviewed the candidates and only one candidate has a plan that will provide all Americans with insurance and help right the economy at the same time. That candidate is Dick Gephardt," said James P. Hoffa, Teamsters General President.

offer health insurance. And Gephardt will pay for the plan by repealing President Bush's ill-conceived tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans.

The skyrocketing costs of health care are crippling our nation. We are now in a full-blown crisis. Our economy will not recover until we reign in costs and provide workers and employers with affordable options. As Teamsters, we will continue to fight to maintain our benefits. But we have a larger responsibility. We cannot sit idly by and watch other Americans sink. We have to fight for national health coverage for all Americans.

# *Learning to* **LEAD**

TEAMSTER  
SCHOLARSHIP  
WINNERS  
REAP BENEFITS



JACQUI AND ELLIE MARTIN ARE TWINS THAT WERE BORN SIX WEEKS premature on March 3, 1983. Each one weighed only four pounds at birth and spent weeks in incubators receiving expert treatment.

“We surely would have died without the excellent medical care we received,” Jacqui Martin said. “This care was paid for and made possible by the Teamsters. I literally owe the union my life.”

Twenty years later, the twins are still reaping the benefits of the Teamsters Union. Because their father was a Teamster for 30 years, they were eligible for the James R. Hoffa Scholarship—as are all children and grandchildren of Teamsters. Thanks to the scholarship, they are both currently attending Stanford University.

“I applied for the scholarship because my father had been a dedicated Teamster for more than three decades and he encouraged me to contact the Teamsters to see if they could help in sending my twin sister and me to college,” said Jacqui’s sister, Ellie.

### **Scholarship Funding**

The sisters were among 75 scholarship winners in 2001. Twenty-five of the awards total \$10,000 each and the rest are one-time grants of \$1,000. Applicants compete in one of five geographic regions where the Teamster parent or grandparent’s local union is located. Beginning in the 2004-2005 school year, the scholarship will bestow 100 awards each year.

The scholarship has enabled me to pursue my studies, which will hopefully help me with my career and goals in life.

— CHARLENE DA CRUZ, JAMES R. HOFFA SCHOLARSHIP WINNER



“We wanted to increase the number of scholarships we give because they are doing so much good,” said Cheryl Johnson, Director of the Teamsters Human Rights Commission. “The scholarship has been a tremendous success. Each year we get such a great batch of smart and well-rounded applicants wanting to further their education.”

“The Teamster tradition of assisting working families lives on through this scholarship,” said Jim Hoffa, Teamsters General President. “My father would be proud to have his name associated with such an important cause.”

### “College of our Dreams”

The scholarship hasn’t simply enabled students to further their education. In some cases, the scholarship made lifelong dreams come true.

“The Teamster scholarship allowed my sister and I to attend the college of our dreams,” Ellie Martin said. “Neither Jacquie nor I could imagine a finer institution than Stanford University, and we continue to be

in awe of the fact that the two of us are lucky enough to be there at the same time.”

Charlene da Cruz, another winner of a James R. Hoffa Scholarship, was awarded the scholarship in 2002. With it, she is now attending Kwantlen University College in Vancouver, British Columbia. Her father is a Teamster at WestShore Terminal in Canada.

“The scholarship has enabled me to pursue my studies, which will hopefully help me with my career and goals in life,” she said. She is currently taking classes in French, geography, anthropology and sociology and pursuing a General Arts degree.

Philip Sinatra is currently attending Washington University in St. Louis. He also received the scholarship in 2002 and his father is a Teamster working for Air-Tran in Orlando, Florida.

“Because of the Teamsters, I am attending one of the best universities in the nation,” he said. “The school is private with a steep tuition fee and without this scholarship, it is highly doubtful that

I would have been able to attend such a university.”

### Relief for Working Families

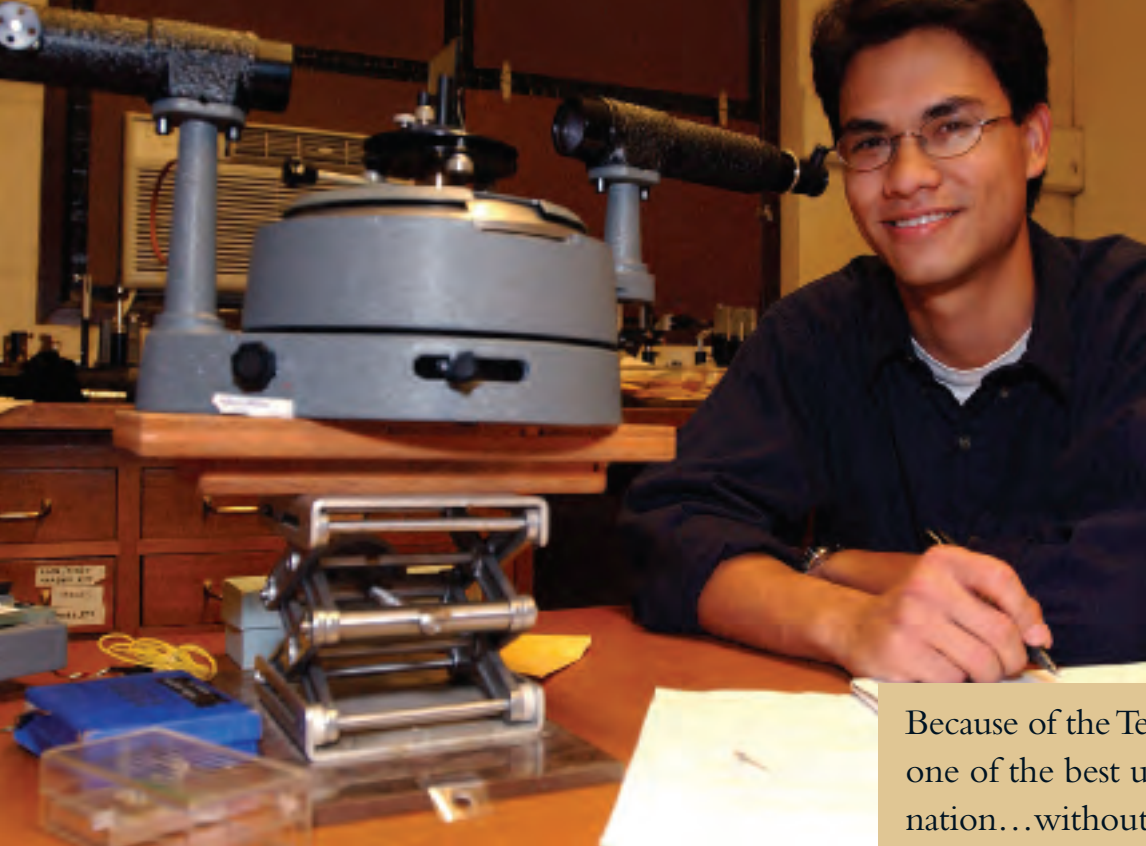
The James R. Hoffa Scholarship not only helps the students but the families who would otherwise have to find other ways to assist with tuition.

“My parents are paying for as much as they can and the scholarship comes into play there,” Sinatra said. “It has been tremendously helpful in allowing them to afford to send me here without putting too great of a financial restraint on them. Because of that, I can be here.”

Lynn Martin, mother of the twins who received the scholarships, said it has helped tremendously.

“The scholarship is really helping us. Both girls are getting help from the university but the Teamster scholarship helps quite a bit,” she said.

“Ellie and I knew that my parents would not be able to afford to send both of us—or even one of us—to Stanford



Because of the Teamsters, I am attending one of the best universities in the nation...without this scholarship, it is highly doubtful that I would have been able to attend such a university.

—PHILIP SINATRA, JAMES R. HOFFA SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

without significant financial assistance,” Jacqui Martin said. “The Teamsters really came through for us on that score, as they have on many other occasions.”

A Teamsters scholarship has existed in one form or another for many years and countless people have been positively affected by it. One of them was Jennifer Woolley who received a scholarship in 1993 that allowed her to attend Wellesley College.

“I was fortunate enough to receive one of these scholarships,” Woolley said. “In the years that have passed, I graduated Wellesley College, earned my MBA and worked for several years in corporate finance...The scholarship greatly helped start my exciting career.”

She is currently a graduate student at the University of California, Irvine, and pursuing her doctorate in management.

### Future Goals

The goals that recipients will achieve because of help from the Teamsters are limitless. Every dollar of each scholarship

not only goes toward education but toward the future of North America.

“I hope to become a physician and Washington University has one of the best biology departments and one of the best medical schools in the nation,” Sinatra said. “That would afford me the opportunity to do research with and interact with some of the world’s best physicians.”

Sinatra is currently a sophomore pre-med student majoring in physics.

While the Martin twins attend Stanford University, they are both currently doing other activities through the school.

“Right now, I am participating in a program called ‘Stanford in Washington.’ The program allows a select group of Stanford students to spend a quarter studying and interning in Washington, D.C.,” Ellie Martin said. “I am interning with the Democrats in the Senate Judiciary Committee.”

She is currently studying policy making and U.S. foreign policy. Her sister Jacqui is studying abroad right now.

“I am currently in Sydney, Australia on

a program run through Stanford that has allowed me to travel up and down the East Coast of Australia studying marine biology and environmental science through hands-on research in places like the Great Barrier Reef and the incredible Daintree Rainforest,” she said. “The summer before last, I was able to travel to Sicily where I took part in an archaeological dig unearthing the remains of a sixth century B.C. city.”

Her major is earth systems, an interdisciplinary environmental science major offered only at Stanford.

“I will hopefully be able to use this degree to pursue my future goal of becoming an environmental lawyer,” Jacqui Martin said.

“I am quite certain that my time at Stanford, for which the Teamsters are partly to thank, is going to prepare me for any future I could possibly hope for,” Ellie Martin said.

Information on how to support the scholarship can be found on the Internet at [www.teamster.org](http://www.teamster.org).



# In Working ORDER

**Teamsters at  
NADEP Keep  
the Navy's  
Aircraft  
Operations  
Running**

**A**T THE NAVAL AIR DEPOT IN JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA, a worker is inspecting a tube with a flashlight and mirror on a rod. All around him sit other tubes and plenty of high-tech equipment that he'll use to inspect the gear around him.

The tube is part of the landing gear from an aircraft in the Navy's fleet and the inspector has to make sure that every detail of it is perfect—down to the last ten-thousandth of an inch.

The tube costs as much as a Cadillac. The inspector is a Teamster.

"The stakes in this job are high," said Tom Aton, the production manager at the Naval Air Depot (NADEP). "The level of skill involved in what these workers do is also high."

There are thousands of workers at the sprawling NADEP facility in Northern Florida. On 102 acres, there are 54 build-



# AR

ings occupying more than two million square feet. Each building is full of aircraft in some state of repair. That's where the Teamsters step in.

## Highly Skilled Workers

There are 120 different occupations at NADEP—most of them are different types of aircraft mechanics or sheet metal mechanics though there are dozens of other classifications. They prefer to be called “artisans” and they are called that for a reason.

“This work can only be done by someone who is highly skilled,” said Mark Andrews, Recording Secretary for Local 512 and business agent for the NADEP Teamsters. “These are some of the most accomplished workers in the world.”

Each worker has a job that requires extraordinary skill and patience. This attention to detail that is required of the workers was reflected in a recent contract victory that smoothed out a number of problem areas for the NADEP workers.

“Some of these workers have to travel quite a bit and problems arose when reservations and accommodations got mixed up. The contract fixes all that,” Andrews said. The three-year agreement also makes promotions more fair and equitable.

“With the new contract, nobody is overlooked. Workers in general need somebody to back them and, with the Teamsters and this contract, we got it,” said Frank Parker, a mechanic on the F-14 Tomcat line.



## Attention to Detail

There are at least one million different pieces that make up a P-3 aircraft. There are miles of wires, thousands of screws and bolts, thousands of moving parts and sheet metal over the entire aircraft. Every bit of the P-3—inside and out—has to be in perfect working order at all times. Keeping these machines ready for anything is what the NADEP Teamsters do.

Aside from the P-3, there are several other aircraft in the fleet that are repaired at NADEP, including strike fighters, anti-submarine aircraft and assault helicopters.

With a lot of the aircraft at NADEP, companies have stopped making parts for them or they are too expensive to buy. At NADEP, they simply make those parts on location.

## BEST IN THE BUSINESS

In addition to having the best occupational safety record of any Navy industrial facility, the other awards and achievements of NADEP include:

- A 500 percent increase in monthly production output of J-52 engines from August 2002 to March 2003.
- Artisans produced four EA-6B aircraft and five F-14 aircraft ahead of their original schedule during the fall and winter of 2002-2003, to enable the carrier battle groups to deploy to the Middle East with a full complement of aircraft for the Iraqi air campaign.
- A record-setting total of over 46,000 aircraft and engine components repaired and returned to the supply system in fiscal year 2002 to support fleet operations.
- A record of over 34 years of mishap-free flight operations receiving the Chief of Naval Operations' Aviation Safety Award for the last three years.



“Our artisans are the best in the world, bar none,” said Randy Means, a steward at NADEP. “Nobody else can do what we do. There's a lot of expertise here.”

## A Stronger Union

NADEP workers joined the Teamsters for many reasons—one of them is history. Those who are Teamsters know they are part of a group with 100 years of fighting for workers behind them.

“I think the most important reason to be a Teamster in this environment is power,” said Johnhenry Greene. Greene has been working at NADEP since 2000 and is a throttle quadrant technician on EA-6B Prowlers and F-14 Tomcats. “The more members we have, the stronger we are. The stronger we are, the more benefits we get. We also get more recognition for the artisans here when we have a big group.”

Doug Hopkins is a sheet metal mechanic on P-3 Orions and has been working there for 16 years. “I've been actively involved with the Teamsters since I've been here,” he said. “I real proud to be at NADEP and I'm proud to be a Teamster.”

**TEAMSTER POWER — WITH A**

# **Latin Twist**



**San Juan's Local 901 Organizes Across Puerto Rico**

**“This is exactly the type of contract we are fighting for here in Puerto Rico... Wages in Puerto Rico have lagged way behind the states, yet we are doing the same work and our productivity in Puerto Rico is very high.”**

— JOSE AYALA, PRESIDENT, LOCAL 901.

In a relatively small place—the size of Connecticut—1,000 miles off of Miami, some big things are happening for Teamsters. The place is Puerto Rico, and Teamsters Local 901—“Union de Tronquistas de P.R.”—in the capital city of San Juan. The local has been on a roll, organizing workers at a feverish pace.

“We have organized more members in the last year than several of the previous years combined,” said Jose Ayala, President of Local 901.

“Organizing is our main focus,” added Secretary-Treasurer Germán Vázquez, the local’s principal officer who, along with Ayala, was elected to his current position in November 2002. “Everyone on the Executive Board and all of our business agents spend part of their time actively organizing. I want my entire team to participate in our struggle to represent more workers.”

In this self-governing U.S. territory, organizing members is especially important because median annual household incomes are about \$12,000 less than those on the U.S. mainland, while the island’s cost of living is high. Good jobs help bridge that gap for Puerto Rico’s nearly 5,000 Teamsters.

During the past two years, Local 901 has won about a dozen organizing campaigns, bringing 1,000 new members into the union. Local 901’s organizing program is as hot as the Caribbean sun that drenches this island of nearly four million people.

### **Bottling Success**

A perfect example of the island’s Teamster Power can be found in the local’s recently negotiated contract with Owens-Illinois, which operates a glass bottling plant in suburban San Juan.

Local 901 organized 168 plant employees a year ago, and the first con-

tract negotiated by the local was a big win for workers. For years, workers had been paid substandard wages, and Local 901 was on a mission to change that.

For example, workers had been receiving about \$200 for a Christmas bonus each year. Puerto Rican law requires profitable businesses to pay the bonuses, and the contract increased the bonus to about \$1,400 each holiday season—about a seven-fold increase.

In addition, the workers received an immediate raise of \$2.67 per hour upon ratification of the contract, and will receive 50 cents per hour raises in the second, third and fourth years of the contract. The company will also pay 100 percent of their health coverage, a big improvement over the past when workers picked up part of the tab. And workers received two additional vacation days, an extra holiday, two additional sick days, extra pay for night-shift work and major improvements in the pension plan.

“This is exactly the type of contract we are fighting for here in Puerto Rico,” Ayala said. “Wages in Puerto Rico have lagged way behind the states, yet we are doing the same work and our productivity in Puerto Rico is very high.”

### **Workers’ Perspectives**

Vázquez and Ayala took *Teamster* magazine on a tour of the bottling plant recently. Along the way, Benjamin Freytes, a tool-maker who has worked at the plant for 28 years, explained why he approached Local 901 to seek union representation.

“Communication with management wasn’t very good and some workers were being treated unfairly,” said Freytes, who is now a shop steward. “The wages were too low. If we want the power, we need to stick together. The Teamsters are providing us with the ability to do that.”

Strolling past machines churning out bottles with a surface temperature of 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit, conditions are hot and difficult. But the work environment is much more tolerable now that the Teamsters have provided relief.

“Before, we didn’t have a strong voice,” said Jose Perez, a machine-mold repairman who has worked at the plant for 14 years. “Now, with the Teamsters, we have somebody to back us up.”

Perez knows about Teamster Power—he was a Teamster for eight years prior to his job at Owens-Illinois when he worked for an electrical equipment manufacturer in Queens, New York.

“Here at this plant, we didn’t get a raise for nearly seven years. Now we’re



# Q&A:

## GERMÁN VÁZQUEZ LOCAL 901



**T**eamster magazine recently spoke with Local 901 Secretary-Treasurer Germán Vázquez on growing the union in Puerto Rico.

**Q: What unique challenges do you face in Puerto Rico in representing and organizing workers?**

**A:** Our labor laws are basically the same as those on the mainland, but we have been facing many anti-labor decisions in the courts in recent years. For example, Law 80 entitles employees who are discharged “without good cause” to severance compensation and the right to get their jobs back. However, the courts have ruled against workers seeking those rights. As a result, we have been losing a powerful organizing tool—the ability to reassure workers that their jobs are protected by the arbitration process. Also, in Puerto Rico, the pharmaceutical industry is very powerful and it is anti-union. It is a huge industry and it delivers that anti-union message. It makes it more challenging to counter that message, but we’re getting through.

**Q: Why is it especially important for workers to have Teamsters representation in Puerto Rico?**

**A:** In Puerto Rico, our incomes are generally much lower than the incomes of workers on the U.S. mainland. Yet our cost of living is very high—it is expensive to import items here. So, it is important to secure union contracts for our workers. As unionized workers, our wages and benefits are higher than those not belonging to a union. The pharmaceutical companies and other businesses locate their plants in Puerto Rico and receive huge tax breaks. It is time for them to share their wealth with the workers.

**Q: Why have you made organizing workers a priority?**

**A:** All across our great union we realize that in order to grow and remain strong we must put all of our resources towards organizing the unorganized. It is no different here. More members means more power—more Teamster Power.

**Q: What goals do you have for Local 901?**

**A:** We are currently trying to organize the workers at the soon-to-open subway in the San Juan area. We already represent the airport workers, taxi drivers, car-rental agencies and city buses. If we can organize the subway workers, we will represent 100 percent of the island’s transportation system. That is important in order to win strong contracts for everyone. We also want to organize workers in the pharmaceutical industry—there are many workers who need, want and deserve strong union contracts.

**Q: What have been the keys to your success?**

**A:** We get involved with everything going on at the local, and we all work as a team. Teamwork is crucial. All of us spend part of our time organizing workers and we make frequent visits to the job sites so the workers feel comfortable asking us questions. When the members see the local’s leaders working as a team, it builds unity throughout the local. That is the only way we will grow.

moving in the right direction,” Perez said. “As Teamsters, we have strength. It’s not the same as going it alone like we did before.”

Down the assembly line, in a much quieter place, quality control workers Angela Bruno and Peter Martinez carefully examine the finished bottles to make sure they are the proper size, weight and color.

“I joined the Teamsters because of the power of the union,” said Bruno, a 22-year plant employee. “We now have an excellent contract that provides better benefits and wages. The communication with management is also better.”

Nearby, Martinez uses a computer to scrutinize a future wine bottle. The precision of his work is matched by his precise thoughts on why he joined the Teamsters.

“I want to make sure my job is still here,” he said. “The Teamsters can help protect my job. The contract provides us with more benefits and now I can speak out without being suppressed.”

### Victory at Pepsi

The bottling plant is just part of Local 901’s commitment to organize. This past summer, Local 901 organized about 150 drivers at Pepsi. Local 901 has long represented



Pepsi workers at the plant in Cidra—about an hour's drive south of San Juan. The plant workers' long-time ties with Local 901 helped convince the drivers that they too should join the union.

Silvia Rivera, a 16-year Pepsi employee, said the Teamsters have provided her with good benefits and job security.

"You also have equality being a Teamster, being part of a team," said Rivera, a secretary in the materials department.

Edwin Rodriguez, an accounting department worker, began at the plant 22 years ago, three years before the Teamsters began representing his department.

"Before the Teamsters were here, the company was clearing the house and firing workers. Then we brought in the Teamsters. Since that time, the company hasn't fired workers at will. We have job security. We have been able to get raises every single year. We are a stronger group than what we were before," he said.

Alberto Colon, a 22-year Teamster who helps produce the syrup for Mountain

Dew and Sierra Mist, works fast to make sure the production line doesn't falter. He moves just as swiftly in summing up why he's a proud Teamster.

"The union provides good contracts, strong pensions, a good medical plan and good wages," Colon said.

Another production worker, Ruben Traverso, likes the protections provided by the Teamsters.

"They protect my job, my livelihood. They give me more security. The union protects me from discrimination," said Traverso, a receiving department employee.

Puerto Ricans have officially been U.S. citizens since 1917 and since that time workers have struggled to get the pay and benefits they deserve. For Confesor Rivera, a 34-year worker at Pepsi, the good Teamsters benefits and wages don't only benefit him. "I have two sons at the University of Puerto Rico. Without the Teamsters, my sons would not be in college," the 25-year shop steward said.

In addition to the new workers, Local 901 has a long track record of representing workers at other companies. Those include UPS, Anheuser-Busch, Heineken, various solid waste companies, hotels, rental car agencies, a casino and Crowley Liner Services, among other places.

### On the Waterfront

The Teamsters have represented workers at Crowley—on the San Juan waterfront—for more than four decades, providing security for thousands of workers and their family members over the years.

Local 901 represents more than 230 marine, trailer control, maintenance, office and car division workers—wall-to-wall coverage. Crowley transports more than one third of the containers and trailers moving between Puerto Rico and the U.S. mainland.

Steward Maria Zayas, a credit and collections clerk at Crowley, said being a Teamster makes all the difference in the world.

"Before becoming a Teamster, I had to fight for my simple rights, like coffee breaks and supervisors making me do work beyond my responsibilities," said Zayas, a 13-year employee at the marine terminal. "But now we have a collective bargaining agreement where the rules are set down. I now have other people fighting the battles for me."

Zayas said Local 901 always steps up to the plate to fight for its members. For example, when workers were not given adequate time and scheduling flexibility for lunch, the local successfully won a \$2.5 million claim on behalf of workers.

"It began as a claim for six workers, but we included everyone," she said.



## ON A ROLL IN SUNNY

# PueRtO RiCo

Local 901 in San Juan, Puerto Rico has organized 1,000 members during the past two years. The organizing victories include:

- Coca-Cola plant – 160 workers;
- San Juan Tour Guides and Happy Sun Tours – 100 workers;
- Owens-Illinois bottling plant – 168 workers;
- Euroclass (Volkswagen dealers) – 14 workers;
- City Stationary – 26 workers;
- Guaynabo Destape (four locations) – 113 workers;
- Rod Rodder Services – 29 workers;
- Waste Management – 10 workers;
- Caribbean Mental Health Services – 28 workers;
- ICB Manufacturing – 20 workers;
- San Juan Cement – 100 workers;
- Pepsi drivers – 150 workers;
- Ford vehicle dealers – 23 workers; and
- Stuart Inc. – 47 workers

### A Vested Interest

Zayas said Crowley workers have been instrumental in the positive changes at Local 901 under the new leadership.

“We feel we have a lot to do with that. Our local is very important to us. Crowley workers have always supplied leaders to our local union. We’re like a leadership school,” she said.

Alexis Rodriguez, another Crowley steward, said the strong link between Crowley workers and the local has resulted in strong contracts each time. The current contract calls for \$1-per-hour annual pay increases for all workers and the company may not close any positions during the life of the contract.

“The fight for worker rights is never over,” said Rodriguez, a stevedore and 14-year Crowley employee. Rodriguez, who also serves as a Local 901 Trustee, said the local’s leadership works hard and is disciplined, which leads to successful organizing. “If we have to wake up at three in the morning to hand out leaflets, we do that.”

Stevedore Jose Gonzalez, a 25-year Crowley employee, noted that his job has provided him with great security.

“The Teamsters have provided us with health insurance, solid pensions. I plan to retire after 30 years. I like the Teamster power,” he said while clenching his fist.

In addition to the workers’ pension

program, Local 901 has also negotiated for the company to contribute funds on behalf of workers who participate in a 401(k) retirement plan.

### A Winning Bet

Across town, at the Wyndham El San Juan Hotel and Casino, Jose Salgado has worked as a casino croupier since 1988. Upset with working conditions and wages, Salgado and four other workers approached Local 901. The workers voted to join the Teamsters in 1995 and they got their first contract in 1996.

“We were fed up with not getting raises and the working conditions. Some of us went eight years without getting a raise,” Salgado said.

At press time, the casino workers were negotiating a new contract.

“We are a united group here, thanks in large part to the leadership of Germán,” said Armando Rodriguez, a croupier who also serves as Local 901’s Recording Secretary. “All of us know that our local stands behind us 100 percent,” Rodriguez added.

Conditions in the casino have improved drastically.

“The Teamsters made us conscious that we had rights,” Salgado said. “When you’re not aware of your rights, management mistreats you. Now—as Teamsters—we get treated with respect.”

Thanks to Local 901’s efforts, more workers in Puerto Rico are joining the Teamsters and getting the respect they deserve.



# NOTICE

## INTERNAL UNION DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

### 1. CHARGES AGAINST DAN DESANTI

Dan DeSanti, formerly an International Vice President and formerly a member of Local Union No. 701, signed an agreement in which he resigned from all union positions, including his office as International Vice President, effective July 31, 2003, and agreed never to hold any office or position with any IBT-related entity in the future.

The agreement resolved pending charges alleging, in part, that Mr. DeSanti failed to investigate the background of convicted labor racketeer Frank Walsh before he arranged a meeting on Walsh's behalf with officials from a Philadelphia area Local Union and that he failed to tell the officials what he knew about Walsh. In sworn deposition testimony, Mr. DeSanti admitted that he knew that Walsh previously had been indicted, convicted and imprisoned based on allegations involving Local 560 and Steve Andretta who was then a business agent at Local 560. Mr. DeSanti further testified that he knew that Andretta had been held in connection with the 1975 disappearance of James R. Hoffa. Andretta was in fact an associate of the Genovese organized crime family whose control of Local 560 led to the court-imposed trusteeship of that Local, and this association had been reported in newspapers in New Jersey and elsewhere. The Consent Decree requires Union officers and members to investigate when they have reason to believe that anyone they are dealing with has any connection to organized crime. In the settlement agreement, Mr. DeSanti admitted that he failed to investigate Walsh's background before he encouraged officers of a Philadelphia Local to enter into a substandard labor agreement with Walsh's trucking company and admitted that he failed to inform the officers of the Local Union concerning what he knew about Walsh. Mr. DeSanti denied the other allegations of the charges involving his contact with organized crime member Michael Sciarra who had been permanently barred from the Union as a result of previous IRB action.

The agreement prohibits Mr. DeSanti, after July 31, 2003, from participating "directly or indirectly, in any manner in any of the activities or affairs of the IBT or any of its affiliated entities, including, but not limited to, official meetings, discussions of union business or affairs, consultations concerning union business or affairs, contract negotiations, votes or any other business activity of the IBT or any IBT entity"; from discussing "any union matter with any officer, member, employee, representative or agent of the IBT or any IBT entity"; from attending "any function or event at the premises of the IBT or any IBT entity" or "any event officially sponsored by the IBT or any IBT entity"; and from attempting "in any way to influence or control the conduct of business, operations or other matters at the IBT or at any IBT related entity."

The agreement does not prohibit Mr. DeSanti from contact and

association with IBT officers, members, employees, representatives and agents with respect to matters that do not involve union business." The agreement provides that any violation of the agreement by Vice President DeSanti "may result in a permanent bar from all voluntary association with any IBT officer, member, employee, representative or agent."

Officers, members, employees and representatives of the International Union or any IBT-related entity are warned not to have any contact with Vice President DeSanti after July 31, 2003, that violates the terms of settlement agreement.

Any questions concerning this matter should be addressed to the Legal Department.

### 2. CHARGES AGAINST RICHARD A. LYTER

Richard A. Lyter, formerly Executive Assistant to the General Secretary-Treasurer and formerly a member of Local Union No. 120, signed an agreement in which he permanently resigned from all union positions, agreed never to hold any office or position with any IBT-related entity in the future, and agreed never to perform any services as a contractor or in any other capacity for any IBT-related affiliate.

Mr. Lyter resigned his employment with the International Union in March 2001. The agreement resolved pending charges alleging that while a member of Local Union No. 120 and while employed by the International Union as Executive Assistant to the General Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Lyter breached his obligation as a member, breached his fiduciary duty as an employee of the International Union and violated federal law and the International Constitution by charging various personal, non-union related expenses on his IBT credit card and by falsifying expense reports in order to receive reimbursement for these expenses from the Union.

In the agreement, Mr. Lyter agrees "never to hold any position, any other employment, office, position or consulting or similar relationship, whether paid or unpaid, with the IBT or any IBT Entity" and that, effective May 20, 2003, forward, he "shall not perform any work for or participate in any manner in any of the activities or affairs of the IBT or any IBT Entity, including, but not limited to, meetings, discussions, consultations, negotiations, votes or any other business or activity of the IBT or any IBT Entity." The agreement does not constitute an admission of the charges or any other misconduct.

The agreement does not prohibit Mr. Lyter from contact and association with IBT officers, members, employees, representatives and agents with respect to matters that do not involve union business.

Any questions concerning this matter should be addressed to the Legal Department.



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## REPORT 75 TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS

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FROM: Independent Review Board

Benjamin R. Civiletti

Joseph E. diGenova

William H. Webster

DATED: November 5, 2003

### I. INTRODUCTION

This is the Independent Review Board's ("IRB") Seventy-fifth Report to you on its activities conducted pursuant to the Consent Order. In this Report, we will discuss matters that have currently come before us, including four new Investigative Reports and the current status of pending charges about which we have previously informed you.

### II. NEW INVESTIGATIVE REPORTS

#### A. ANDRE PITTMAN - Local 295, Valley Stream, New York

On November 3, 2003, the IRB issued an Investigative Report to Members of the Local 295 Executive Board concerning Member Andre Pittman. The Report recommended that Mr. Pittman be charged with bringing reproach upon the IBT by refusing to appear for his scheduled in-person sworn examination. The Executive Board was given 90 days to file the charges, hold a hearing and forward a final written report to the IRB.

#### B. LOCAL 531 - YONKERS, NEW YORK

On October 30, 2003, the IRB issued an Investigative Report to General President Hoffa recommending that Local 531 be placed in trusteeship. The Local is not being run for the benefit of its members and in accordance with the IBT Constitution. Local 531 has a long history of corruption and ties to organized crime. Prior to an earlier Trusteeship, under the Consent Decree four Local officers were charged. In February 2000, the General President appointed John Zirpoli, a shop steward from Local 707, to replace the first Trustee who had resigned in January 2000. Prior to being appointed Trustee, Mr. Zirpoli had no experience as a business agent, union officer or Benefit Fund Trustee. Furthermore, eight months after being appointed Trustee, Zirpoli was appointed a Local 707 business agent and officer. At that time, he reduced his work at Local 531 to three days a week.

Local 531 is in poor financial condition. For example, according to the 2002 Form LM-2 the Local filed with the Department of Labor, as of December 31, 2002, the Local's liabilities exceeded its assets by \$50,064. As of July 31, 2003, the Local's liabilities exceeded its assets by

\$44,877. This is after the apparent improper transfer of assets from ERISA Funds to the Local.

During the Trusteeship and continuing to the present, Local 531 received payments from the Local's six affiliated Benefit Funds for alleged administrative expenses without documentation of the administrative services that Local employees allegedly provided to the Benefit Funds. Money improperly taken from these ERISA Funds was transferred into the Local to help keep the Local afloat and the union appointed Trustees of the Funds failed to stop this. The Local's accountant, who was also the Funds' accountant, appeared to facilitate it.

In addition, the Local continues to have suspicious collective bargaining agreements and suspicious relationships with employers. Several bargaining agreements remain dramatically substandard. Another issue that had been raised in the IRB's 1999 Trusteeship recommendation was the lack of financial controls at the Local. It appears that the Local continues to lack financial controls. For example, two of the Local's Trustees testified that they did not verify the Local's bank balances each month as required by the IBT Constitution.

Mr. Hoffa informed the IRB that he put Local 531 in Trusteeship, effective November 19, 2003.

#### C. ANTHONY PICCOLO - LOCAL 813, LONG ISLAND CITY, NEW YORK

Before formal charges could be recommended by the IRB to the IBT, Local 813 Member Anthony Piccolo submitted a compromise agreement to the IRB. In June 2003, the Chief Investigator's Office scheduled an in-person sworn examination of Mr. Piccolo for which he did not appear. At the sworn examination, he would have been questioned about his alleged association with organized crime figures. In the Agreement, while not admitting or denying wrongdoing, Mr. Piccolo agreed to permanently resign from the IBT and Local 813. The IRB found the Agreement served to resolve the matter. United States District Judge Preska approved the Agreement on October 1, 2003.

#### D. CHUCK CRAWLEY, DENNIS BANKHEAD AND MARIE ESPINOSA - LOCAL 988, HOUSTON, TEXAS

On October 9, 2003, the IRB issued an Investigative Report to General President Hoffa concerning Local 988 President and Business Manager Chuck Crawley, Secretary-Treasurer Dennis Bankhead and Member Marie Espinosa. The Report recommended that Mr. Crawley be charged with breaching his fiduciary duties to the Local and its members, embezzling and converting Local 988 funds to his own use and the use of others by engaging in a scheme for his own profit in which he caused Local 988 to pay \$20,000 more than was necessary for the telephone installation at the new union hall. Mr. Crawley also caused the Local to issue checks for \$8,781.78 payable to a ven-

dor for the purchase of t-shirts and stickers when he knew the items were purchased from other vendors for approximately \$5,786.82. He received the difference between the sums authorized and the sums paid to the actual vendors.

The Report further recommended that Mr. Crawley and Mr. Bankhead be charged with bringing reproach upon the IBT, embezzling and converting union property to their own use by taking Local mobile barbecue pits. The Report also recommended that Mr. Crawley and Mr. Bankhead be charged with embezzling and converting Local 988 union funds to the use of another by paying approximately \$2,467.50 for Ms. Espinosa's legal fees in connection with her invoking her Fifth Amendment privilege before the Grand Jury and her motion to quash a subpoena requesting her business records dealing with the Local.

In addition, the Report recommended that Mr. Crawley, Mr. Bankhead and Ms. Espinosa be charged with breaching their fiduciary duties and embezzling and converting Local 988 union funds to the use of another by assisting Ms. Espinosa in embezzling money from Local 988.

After filing the charges recommended by the IRB, Mr. Hoffa referred the charges back to the IRB for a hearing.

### III. STATUS OF PREVIOUS IRB CHARGES

#### A. THOMAS A. PLINIO - Local 97, Union, New Jersey

We have previously informed you that on August 26, 2003, the IRB issued an Investigative Report to the Members of Local 97 Executive Board concerning Member Thomas A. Plinio. The Report recommended that Mr. Plinio be charged with bringing reproach upon the IBT by refusing to appear for his scheduled in-person sworn examination. Charges were filed against Mr. Plinio and a hearing was held on October 9, 2003. The Local 97 Executive Board found Mr. Plinio guilty as charged and permanently barred him from Local 97 and the IBT. The IRB has the matter under review.

#### B. LOCAL 901 - San Juan, Puerto Rico

In past issues of the *Teamster* magazine we informed you that over a number of years Local 901 allegedly

engaged in a pattern of conduct in violation of the IBT Constitution and which prevented the members from obtaining information and exercising their rights. In response to the IRB's report, Mr. Szymanski informed the IRB that newly elected officers are in place and former FBI Agent Angelo Class is continuing his investigation of issues identified in our report. On September 25, 2003, General President Hoffa approved the revised Local 901 Bylaws.

### IV. TOLL-FREE HOTLINE

Since our last report to you, the hotline has received approximately 80 calls reporting alleged improprieties. As in the past, all calls which appeared to fall within IRB jurisdiction were referred for investigation. Activities which should be reported for investigation include, but are not limited to, association with organized crime, corruption, racketeering, embezzlement, extortion, assault, or failure to investigate any of these.

Please continue to use the toll-free hotline to report improprieties which fall within IRB jurisdiction by calling 1-800-CALL-IRB (1-800-225-5472). If you are calling from within Washington, D.C., dial 434-8085. The IRB facsimile number is 202-434-8084.

### V. CONCLUSION

As always, our task is to insure that the goals of the Consent Order are fulfilled. In doing so, it is our desire to keep the IBT membership fully informed about our activities. If you have any information concerning allegations of wrongdoing or corruption, you may call the toll-free hotline noted above or you may write to either the IRB Chief Investigator or the IRB office:

Charles M. Carberry, Chief Investigator  
17 Battery Place, Suite 331  
New York, NY 10004

Independent Review Board  
444 North Capitol Street, NW  
Suite 528  
Washington, DC 20001



# THE HERO OF I-35

## Iowa Teamster Saves Crash Victims

**W**hen Teamster Bob Estle saw a car along a highway go out of control and roll over four times, he pulled over, turned on his emergency flasher lights, applied his emergency brake and called 9-1-1 on his cell phone.

The member of Local 650 in Waterloo, Iowa didn't stop there. He ran to the accident scene along Interstate 35 near Northfield, Minnesota and, along with a volunteer firefighter who also saw the accident, helped the crash victims.

A little girl was ejected from the car and Estle helped apply first aid, covered the girl and her mother with blankets and helped carry the child to a helicopter for airlift to a Minneapolis trauma center.

### Right Place at the Right Time

"I'm glad I was in the right place at the right time to help," said Estle, 54, who has driven for Ruan Transportation in Mason City, Iowa for about three years.

Estle applied gauze to the girl's bleeding lip and helped apply a neck brace to the mom.

"I also was able to provide information on the girl's reactions to the medics, which

helped them stabilize her," Estle said.

For his efforts, Ruan presented Estle with its Gold "R" humanitarian award—the company's highest employee honor.

### Highway Hero

"Bob deserves that honor—he helped save a girl's life," said Dave Miller, Local 650's Secretary-Treasurer. "Bob remained calm and focused and stayed on the scene until medics arrived. We're all extremely proud of Bob."

Estle has been a truck driver for more than two decades, but he's only been a Teamster for the past three years or so.

"I'm proud to be a Teamster. I wish I had joined years earlier. The Teamsters have provided me with a great living and strong brotherhood," he said.

"Without Robert's help, this little girl's outcome could have been much worse," said Andrew Yurek, Emergency Medical Services Director at Northfield Hospital. "Robert pulled over, called 9-1-1, and then made sure persons wanting to pick the girl up did not injure her more. Robert could have driven by and no one would have noticed, but he stopped and assisted in the care of an injured patient."

*"Bob remained calm and focused, and stayed on the scene until medics arrived. We're all extremely proud of Bob."*

— DAVE MILLER, LOCAL 650'S SECRETARY-TREASURER

# THE JAMES R. HOFFA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

# Learning *to* Lead



## International Brotherhood of Teamsters 2004-2005 Academic Year Scholarships

For High School Seniors who  
are Children or Grandchildren  
of Teamster Members

Applications due by March 31, 2004.  
For more information, contact your  
local Teamsters Union office or visit  
[www.teamster.org](http://www.teamster.org)