

# IMPACT

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## HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES

### MANAGEMENT RESPONDS TO UNION'S CONCERNS

**Now that DEP heavy and specialized equipment is being maintained by the Department of Sanitation as part of the Citywide Fleet Consolidation, Local 246 has raised some health and safety concerns in regard to members on the job.**

As part of the Citywide Fleet Consolidation, approximately 100 vehicles include flusher trucks, basin machines, jet rod-der attachments, vactor trucks and FRK series fork lifts (equipment involved in sewer cleaning and maintenance) would now be maintained by the Department

of Sanitation. After being apprised of the health hazards connected to working on these type vehicles when not cleaned properly, Local 246 immediately began discussions with the Mayor's office regarding this issue.

In January, the NYC Office of Environmental Protection and the DEP's Office of Environmental Health and Safety conducted a job hazard assessment for some mechanics who service DEP heavy duty vehicles.

In a letter sent to the Union, management wrote: "DEP staff will be providing safety training regarding these units for all staff who may service the units. Similar training has been provided to DEP mechanics in the past and more recently to Parks staff as part of an earlier consolidation with DEP. Training will also be provided to DOT staff assisting with towing."

The safety recommendations from the hazard assessment include proper training, appropriate protective clothing, and high temperature washer and dryers. DSNY facilities do all have washers and driers now,

though not all operating at the high temperatures recommended.

While this has been an ongoing discussion between the Union and management, President Joe Colangelo said he is glad to see that the concerns are being taken seriously and an appropriate course of action is being implemented.

Although in many cases, there is preliminary cleaning of DEP vehicles before they are delivered to the DSNY shops, during their course of work, DSNY mechanics who are working on DEP vehicles may be exposed to sewage and therefore, should take precautions to prevent such exposure.

Colangelo said these recommendations are consistent with the previous training and precautions taken at DEP with mechanical repair staff.

"We stand ready and willing to repair all equipment, but we will not sacrifice the health and safety of our members. We made our concerns well known and management has taken us seriously," Colangelo said.

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Union's Tax Benefit



Annuity Fund Review



Harper Street Visit

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# Message from President JOSEPH A. COLANGELO



Our first Union meeting of 2013 will take place the day after the arrival of spring. As with all new beginnings, I am hopeful that this year things will start to brighten up.

As I wrote about in my first two president's messages this year, a lot has been going on since the Fleet Consolidation was placed on hold in late 2012. While the full completion is still months away, many things may have changed for some of our members who were transferred to different agencies. Fortunately however, no one lost their job and in fact, the City has continued to hire new mechanics and service workers. Granted, not a pace we would like to see, but at least they are hiring.

We've had a few Fleet meetings since the beginning of this year, with the situation surrounding the DEP consolidation our main concern. Our insistence on addressing the health and safety training has begun to pay off. The agencies have started to improve many of the items we discussed and while there is still a long way to go, we seem to be moving in the right direction.

The most recent Fleet Consolidation meeting we attended was to discuss one of the final phases that requires Sanitation to take over Parks' beach operations in the Rockaways. We learned at that meeting that due to the impact of Hurricane Sandy on the Rockaways, the transfer of this equipment responsibility to Sanitation may not take effect until after the summer, if at all. The Union continues to identify issues that may arise with consolidating agencies, and we continue to work within the scope of reality. The good news is that Parks employees will not be transferring to Sanitation due to the reduced head count in Parks. Instead, Sanitation will be hiring in order to meet the responsibility of Parks' beach operations. In addition, we have requested additional training for our

## LAWRENCE KOMNICK SCHOLARSHIP

**Applications are now available for ACTIVE members to apply for our brother Lawrence Komnick Memorial Scholarship Award. For those members who do not know the history of this scholarship, Lawrence was an Auto Mechanic who worked at the Police Department and was tragically killed in the performance of a truck inspection.**

To receive an application for dependent children, Active members should call the Union Office. The scholarship is a \$1,000 award and is a one-time only grant.

**Applications must be completed and postmarked by April 30, 2013**, and include an official transcript of SAT scores that is signed and verified by the high school.

members and it appears that the City may well be rolling out a program utilizing A.S.E. certification. As we learn more details, we will pass the information along to our Shop Stewards.

On a different note, it was encouraging to read recently that State Assembly Democrats recently approved upping New York's \$7.25-an-hour minimum wage to \$9 with annual indexing for inflation, mirroring President Obama's federal proposal.

While the bill still needs approval from the Senate, where Republican leader Dean Skelos opposes the hike saying it would cost businesses \$2,800 per full-time employee — \$480 million in all — and will force companies to lay off workers. This proposed increase is definitely a move in the right direction. It goes to show that at least some of our elected officials know that those who make up the majority of the workforce nationwide need to earn enough to support their families. Most Americans are not sitting in plush offices pulling in multi-million dollar salaries with extensive benefit and retirement packages. Instead, we are in the trenches doing the meat-and-potatoes work that is the backbone of society. If everyone were appropriately compensated for the work they do, then maybe more would be on the payrolls and off social welfare programs. Increased pay can reduce our national deficit.

And while I am speaking about politicians, I want to report for a minute on the upcoming New York City Mayor's race. The Democratic primary is most likely going to determine who becomes our next Mayor, as Republicans have not exactly put up a real contender. After suffering for years with an anti-labor Michael Bloomberg, unions across the City are working to ensure our next Mayor will at least be fair, impartial and reasonable when it comes to negotiating contracts. Bloomberg's refusal to negotiate has only increased the financial burden on the next administration.

That's why Local 246 has participated in candidate interviews as part of a Civil Service Coalition of Building Trades and Municipal unions, and recently attended a day-long candidate screening by the Central Labor Council with all candidates.

The MLC is also looking to meet with Democratic Mayoral candidate to hear their positions on and solutions to problems unions are facing, specifically a lack of contracts. Every City union is without a contract and in some cases have been for more than

four years. We want to know how each candidate plans to tackle this problem and how they intend to bargain with union leaders. Whether or not unions can agree on supporting one candidate is yet to be seen. While we all have our own members' best interests at heart, we all know that without securing decent and fair contracts moving forward, we are all at risk.

While I'm on the topic of Mayor, it has become quite obvious that our billionaire leader does not exactly know what he's doing when it comes to large City projects, such as the disastrous CityTime deal, or the 911 system upgrade.

A recent article in *The Post* said that Bloomberg's controversial \$2 billion effort to modernize the 911 system — billed as a cure-all for every emergency-communications ill — was labeled a boondoggle by the city's own experts two years ago. According to the article, "The consultant's 45-page report explained the city was wasting its money by plowing ahead without resolving key problems. It slams the high-tech system for management failures and computer glitches, and clobbers key communications officials for refusing to cooperate and, instead, battling over turf."

The document not only had been kept from the public but was also withheld from auditors from the City Comptroller's Office, who spent more than a year analyzing the mammoth project.

It's high time the Mayor was more open and honest with New Yorkers and stopped trying to blame the City's supposed fiscal woes on what he claims are too many municipal workers. This repeated finger-pointing in the wrong direction has cast a negative haze over those who work so hard to keep our City running. The Mayor's blatant misappropriation of City funds to contracts with little or no oversight has played a large part in getting us where we are today.

These and other important topics will be discussed at the March general membership meeting, which also happens to be our **Greenest** Contest. Come dressed in your best St. Pat's outfit. See you there.

# MEMORIAL AWARD

Members' dependent children graduating high school in June 2013 are eligible to apply. The names of those received with the top 10 highest SAT scores will be put into a raffle and one name will be picked to receive this scholarship award. Drawing for the scholarship will take place at the May 2013 General Membership Meeting.

# GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING & GREENEST CONTEST

Thursday, **MARCH 21, 2013**

6:00 p.m.

St. Stanislaus Church

61-17 Grand Avenue

Maspeth, NY 11378

- ▶ 50/50 Raffle
- ▶ Door Prizes
- ▶ Refreshments

# GOOD WELFARE



## IN MEMORIAM:

### Salvaore Barrotta

Ret. Auto Mechanic — San

### Walter Bellmer

Ret. Auto Mechanic — San

### Keith Francis

Ret. Auto Mechanic — EMS

## IN MEMORIAM FAMILY:

### Nicola Aguanno (Father)

Auto Mechanic Diesel — San

### Thomas DeSantis (Mother)

Auto Mechanic Diesel — San

### Thomas Langone (Mother)

Auto Mechanic — San

### Richard Langone (Grandmother)

Auto Electrician — DOT

### Thomas Rojack (Mother)

Auto Mechanic — DOT

### James Sullivan (Father)

Auto Mechanic — Fire

### Tom Treacy (Mother)

Auto Mechanic — Police

## RETIRING MEMBERS:

### Gilberto Acosta

Auto Mechanic — San

### Neil Austin

Auto Mechanic — Police

### Paul Buchell

Auto Mechanic — San

### Francisco Burgos

Machinist Helper — BOE

### Ronald Hebert

Auto Mechanic — Police

### Robert Labella

Auto Mechanic San

### Robert McAndrew

Machinist — BOE

### Frederick Rilling

Auto Mechanic — Fire

### Philip Siciliano

Auto Service Worker — San

## NEW MEMBERS:

### Shelton Ashley

Auto Service Worker — San

### Yan Carlos Sanchez

Auto Mechanic — San

### James D. Coakley

Auto Service Worker — San

### Alicides Lopez

Auto Service Worker — Fire

### Stephen Parente

Auto Mechanic Diesel — San

### Francisco Bracero

Auto Mechanic — Parks

### Compton Motayne

Auto Service Worker — San

### Daniel De Jesus

Auto Service Worker — Fire

### Kevin Lu

Auto Service Worker — San

### Seeraj Jagnarine

Auto Service Worker — San

### Sean Ramnauth

Auto Mechanic — San

### Brett Wieland

Auto Mechanic — San

### Peter Mangal

Machinist — DEP

### William Cianci

Auto Mechanic — San

### Mahesh Narayan

Auto Mechanic — San

## CONGRATULATIONS:



to **Sanitation Shop Steward Jason Vetter** on his upcoming promotion to Supervisor. Vetter became a Local 246 member in 2000 and was elected Shop Steward April 29, 2011.

"We wish Jason well in his new career," said President Joe Colangelo "We are losing a great Shop Steward and the City is gaining an excellent candidate for Supervisor. Jason is a real team player and has always looked out for the members in Sanitation. Although we will see him around in the Shop, we will miss him as a part of our Local 246 family."

Send us announcements about family births, graduations, awards, honors, special trips and other family special occasions, along with photos, for our newsletter.

VISIT THE UNION'S WEBSITE  
[www.nyclocal246.org](http://www.nyclocal246.org)

# NEWS & NOTES

**ACTIVE MEMBER SHOE VOUCHERS** — The Officers and Executive Board of Local 246 announce that all **Active Dues Paying Members** may be reimbursed up to \$60 toward the expense incurred for one pair of work-related shoes purchased AT ANY STORE. This is an increase in the reimbursement rate from last year. **Shoes must be purchased between January 1 and May 31, 2013. Claim must be submitted by June 15, 2013.** All active members should have already received a reimbursement form with instructions. Anyone who did not receive one should contact the Union office.

**NEW PRESCRIPTION PLAN CARDS** — Members should have already received their new Citizens Rx prescription drug plan cards in the mail. Anyone who has not received theirs, or who received cards with incorrect information, should contact the Local 246 office at 212-233-0616. The new cards became effective January 1, 2013. Mail in order forms for prescriptions can be downloaded from the website. The Union encourages all members to use this method as it saves the Fund money and is a better benefit than having a prescription filled at a local drug store.

**RETIREE DUES FOR 2013** — Retiree dues for 2013 were payable in full by January 31, 2013, and are now **OVERDUE**. If you have not already done so, please send your check or money order for \$60 payable to NYC Local 246, and send to the Union at 217 Broadway, Suite 501, New York, NY 10007. The amount is nominal and just covers the per capita and retiree mailings.

**LAST CALL FOR INCOME TAX BENEFIT** — Time is running out to take advantage of the Union's income tax benefit, as April 15 is right around the corner. The benefit is administered by the accounting firm of Wendel-Walowitz Associates, Inc. and is available to both Active and Retired members. The final dates are Saturday, March 23 at Kowalski VFW Post #4: 61-57 Maspeth Ave. Maspeth, NY 11378; and Wednesday

March 20 and Saturday, May 30 at 68 South Service Road, Suite 100 (Regus Office Center, Melville 11747. Anyone who cannot make it to one of these times should contact David Walowitz at (212) 682-6003 to schedule an appointment at his office, 420 Lexington Ave., Suite 2737, New York, NY 10170.

**CITIZENS RX PREFERRED FORMULARY** — The 2013 Citizens RX National Preferred Formulary is now available on the Local 246 website at [www.nyclocal246.org](http://www.nyclocal246.org). This list contains the most commonly prescribed drugs. It represents an abbreviated version of the drug list (formulary) that is at the core of your prescription-drug benefit plan. For specific question about your coverage, please call the phone number printed on your ID card. If you do not have internet access, or cannot download the list, please contact the Union office at (212) 233-0616.

**COLLEGE LETTERS DUE FOR SPRING SEMESTER** — **Retiree members** with dependent(s) ages 19 to 23, who are attending college full time, must submit proof each semester, Fall and Spring. Spring semester letters are due by February 15, 2013. A letter that is signed, dated and bearing the seal of the College Registrar, stating that the dependent is a full-time, matriculated student is required as proof of eligibility for Prescription Drug Benefits. Claims for dependents whose letters have expired will not be honored. Dates on all claims must correspond with semesters for payment.

**MEDICARE-ELIGIBLE RETIREES ENROLLED IN APPROVED HMOs** — NYC Local 246 will prepare the second half of 2012's reimbursement payments for those Medicare eligible retirees currently enrolled and/or who have opted to purchase their drug rider through deductions in their pension checks. In order to receive reimbursement from the Retirees Welfare Fund, eligible retirees must forward to the Union Office copies of their pension stubs for the period of July 1-December 31, 2012.

## UNION ROUNDUP

**The Citizens Rx transition process** that started January 1, 2013 has now been fully implemented, with fewer member calls coming into the Union office. Our first invoices are in and if the savings trend continues, the switch to Citizens Rx as our new prescription provider will prove to be a good deal for our funds. We of course will have a better analysis after six months of claims, so we will keep you posted. All existing active and retired members should have been sent two cards. We have corrected all errors that we are aware of. Anyone who still has issues with their cards should contact the Union office.

**The Union recently held a meeting** regarding the Rockaway Parks to Sanitation consolidation. Due to Hurricane Sandy, it will be a slower process than normal, and it is still unclear how the final consolidation in this area will look.

**President Colangelo attended a labor-management meeting** at Bellevue Hospital, which has been closed since Hurricane Sandy. The Union has a Sheet Metal Worker at Bellevue, but like most hospital trades, he had been steadily working at the facility to get it up and running. Hopefully this is a good lesson to the City and Bellevue that dedicated trades have the most knowledge and experience and in times of urgency, know how to get the job done, and get it done quickly.

**Local 246 met with DOE on health and safety issues**, as well as a DOE reduction in trades staff. Our concern is that members are being sent into unsafe environments alone, climbing roofs and working in boiler rooms. We stressed the safety aspects of the work we perform.

**The Union held a labor-management meeting** with OLR regarding the Department of Correction not paying overtime when an employee took a vacation day or sick day in the same week that overtime was worked. This issue has since been resolved. Going forward employees will be paid correctly.

## HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES

MANAGEMENT RESPONDS  
TO UNION'S CONCERNS

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Colangelo said some of the key issues that will be addressed in the above-mentioned training include the use of personal protective equipment including gloves, boot covers, and disposable plastic face masks and washing work clothing at the garage. The City is procuring new high temperature laundry equipment for members after Local 246 pointed out the lack of commercial units with high enough water temperatures to disinfect clothing.

He said any member wishing an extra locker to store clothing that is used while maintaining this equipment should speak to their Shop Steward.

The facilities that work on this equipment include Parks 5-Boro Randalls Island, DSNY Central Repair Shop, DSNY Manhattan Boro Shop, Cioffe Boro Shop, Queens Boro Shop, Richmond Boro Shop/Fresh Kills, selected district garage facilities, and DOT mobile towing units.

"Many issues arose during the fleet consolidation that were just not taken into consideration earlier," Colangelo said. "We have been having ongoing discussions with management and have been very clear that nothing comes before the health and safety of our members."

## ANNUITY FUND

### QUARTERLY REVIEW



The Annuity Fund Trustees held their quarterly meeting with the Fund's investment consultant, attorney, accountant and third party administrator to review last year's investment results and discuss investments decisions moving forward. Morgan Stanley Senior Vice President Joe Lizzio, pictured front center making a presentation, talked about the current economic environment both in the U.S. and abroad and how it continues to impact the financial markets. He said that although the Fund earned an 11 percent return in 2012, there needs to be a solution to the growing national deficit and continued unstable financial environment if results like that are going to continue. Pictured from left are Union Trustee John Cox, President Joe Colangelo, Recording Secretary Jim Grillo, Treasurer Ray Schacor, VP Charles Pastorelli, Annuity Fund Attorney Nicole Perez, Accountant David Walowitz and Lizzio.

## FREE FOOD AT MARCH MEETING

### Annual Contest for "GREENEST" OUTFIT

**The membership meeting on Thursday, March 21**  
is our St. Patrick's Day celebration meeting

As in the past, Local 246 will mark the occasion by providing free food after the meeting.

**We'll also be having a contest for the "greenest" outfit.**

Put on your best green attire — shirt, hat, pants, tie or anything else you have that's green — **and join us at the March meeting.**

**Members will vote on the top three "GREENEST" outfits and prizes will be awarded.**

**This is one meeting you Don't Want to Miss!!**



# Labor's Turnaround:

## AFL-CIO Plan to Save the Movement

**The AFL-CIO held a closed-door executive meeting recently, at which the mood, according to one AFL-CIO top staffer, was that the future of the labor movement was at risk if they continued "business as usual."**

Strategies proposed at the meeting involve re-evaluating and re-framing labor's mission. President Richard Trumka and other leaders hope to both draw strength from, and add heft to, the progressive movement. While not entirely novel, the plans would move labor more out of its traditional insularity and into greater solidarity not only within labor but also with other progressive groups.

Both Trumka and CWA President Larry Cohen, who heads the federation's organizing committee, said at the meeting that the goal was not just gaining new members or better contracts, but trying to "connect the dots" among causes — such as immigrant rights, worker rights, campaign and voting reform — to build a mass movement for a strong democracy at work and in the public arena.

They emphasized that the AFL-CIO must

reflect the labor movement's changing shape, reaching beyond its core of legally recognized unions to new forms of worker representation. "It's about bringing all of our allies together to make them part of the process," Trumka said. Although he did not lay out plans to do so, it would make sense to involve members of the unions directly in this discussion, not solely through elected representatives.

The continued decline of union members as a share of the workforce — down to 11.3 percent last year — undoubtedly contributed to a new seriousness. Much of organized labor's lost share of the workforce last year reflects heavy layoffs in relatively strong union sectors, especially public and manufacturing workers, that disproportionately hit highly unionized states like Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin and New York. And in most of those states, unions suffered direct political attacks.

Trumka argues that the labor movement must not separate politics, organizing and other activities but must incorporate "innovation and growth" into every dimension of its work.

Labor's primary focus must be on democratizing America, securing rights for average people at work and in politics, building their power and raising their standards of living. The United States has fallen far below other industrial countries in democracy, rights and standards of living, now looking more like Mexico or Colombia.

Without the people, resources and experience with collective action that union members provide, any new democracy movement will be much weaker. But without a new democracy movement, unions may become only a memory.

— Reprinted in part from *Portside Labor*

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# HARPER STREET VISIT

## UNION ATTENDS MANAGEMENT MEETING

President Joe Colangelo, Secretary Jim Grillo and Business Agent Tom Graziano were invited by management recently to a follow-up meeting regarding a grievance. The meeting was held at Harper Street, a Department of Transportation facility in Queens on Northern Boulevard across from Mets City Field.

The informal meeting was to address various issues within DOT in addition to the grievance. Concerns about Fleet Consolidation were high on the agenda.

"The meeting went well," Colangelo said. "Both sides agreed to disagree on some matters but at least the conversation was cordial and management was open-minded. Having a good line of communication is always more helpful than heated conversations in which no one leaves happy."

After the meeting, Colangelo, Grillo and Graziano had a chance to talk directly with members who work in the facility and address their individual concerns.

Pictured from left: Auto Mechanics Mel Sperrazza, Joseph Taranto, Joseph Battel, Michael Cawley, David Mattessich, Ernesto Ferrante, Andrew Klarmann, and Paul Bergin.



REMEMBER OUR TROOPS & PRAY FOR THEIR SAFETY

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