

IMPACT

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MARCH 2014

MACHINIST TEST STUDY CLASS LOCAL 246 SPONSORS FOR MEMBERS



As a way to help members planning to take the upcoming Machinist exam, Local 246 recently sponsored a study class for those wanting a review.

On Saturday, March 1, more than 50 members attended the test study class held at St. Stanislaus School. President Joe Colangelo, along with Department of Sanitation Machinist Bill Curiel, instructed the class.

"We had a great turnout," Colangelo said. "I'm glad so many of our members opted to take advantage of the class, which hopefully will be beneficial in preparing them to take the exam. The Union thanks Bill for his time in instructing the members."

Colangelo said members reported being very thankful for the opportunity to review and receive helpful information for the test scheduled on March 25. On the Union's website, members can find five practice study guides to use in preparation for the exam. They can be found at the top of the News Page.

In addition, members are reminded that filing dates for the Machinist Helper Exam is May 7-27, 2014.



New York City Local 246
Statement of Assets and Liabilities
December 31, 2013

Assets:
Cash - Checking Accounts
Investments - Fair Value
Prepaid Expenses
Accrued Interest Receivable
Fixed Assets - Net of Depreciation
Due From Retired Employees Welfare Fund
Due From Welfare Fund



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Message from President JOSEPH A. COLANGELO



In the last month we have heard some interesting labor news from around New York and the country.

One of the two biggest news items locally is, of course, that Mayor Bill de Blasio needs to start contract talks quickly. Even Comptroller Scott Stringer recently stressed the importance of resolving all contracts before June 30, 2014 — the end of the current fiscal year.

At the time I wrote this message, it appears that at least things were headed in the right direction. Real contract talks are something we haven't seen in years. With every union out of contract, there is a long way to go, but once the first deal is inked, that will bode well for those that follow — assuming of course that

the news is good.

On the other hand, and speaking of contract talks, the contract dispute with MTA employees who work for the LIRR is ongoing. The federal mediation panel recommendations to approve raises but also require employees to pay a portion of their health care premiums was rejected by management. The union was extremely upset with that decision and rightfully so. The reason is that in the past, when the panel recommendation favored management, the MTA Board would agree and use it for structuring its contract proposal. However, when the panel recommendation

FORMER PRES. JOHN VENIOS DIES Lead Union for 20 Years



Former Local 246 President John Venios, who lead the Union from 1973-1993, died February 27, 2014, at Community Medical Center in Toms River, New Jersey. John was a Machinist in the Department of Sanitation before retiring in 1993.

"John was the president of Local 246 when I was hired in 1981," President Joe Colangelo said. "While I only knew him from the General Membership meetings, he served this Local and our membership well for the 20 years he was at the helm, which is quite commendable. John lead Local 246 through

the financial crisis of the 1970s, which was a difficult time for all unions. We commend him on all his years of service and send our condolences to his family."

John was Treasurer of the Bocce and Italian-American clubs, was an avid card player, and loved fishing and going to Atlantic City. He is survived by his wife of 25 years, Joyce, four daughters, two stepsons, six grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

now favors the workers, management refuses to agree with the findings. The standoff between the two could eventually lead to a strike impacting the thousands of daily commuters who rely on the trains to get to work. Its unfortunate that management continues to play with people's lives — the lives of the workers and those of the people whose livelihood depends on getting to work each day.

In national labor news, it would be impossible not to realize the magnitude of Detroit's bankruptcy. Detroit has lost a large part of its population in the recent past that affected its tax base and its ability to pay for services such as police, fire, and sanitation. The latest proposal is to reduce current employees' pensions by 90%! You read that right. Most retirees would receive 10 percent of their pensions. Talk about devastating news.

The unions, of course, are still fighting this in the courts and whenever it gets decided, neither side will not be satisfied; everyone will lose in one form or another. Due to the recent numerous headlines surrounding this situation, many are now questioning the viability of public employee pensions, claiming that past promises made in negotiations were too extreme. We are hearing time and again that the only solution is to reduce benefits not only for current retirees, but also for those currently employed. This new development that would be effect current workers must be watched and attacked every time it's discussed.

The collateral damage from Detroit already is being used to attack labor across the country. The best example of this is with the vote against unionizing the Volkswagon plant in Chattanooga, TN. U.S. Senator Bob Cocker used the Detroit bankruptcy to argue that the unions were responsible for the city's troubles and that the United Auto Workers union is partly to blame because it started in Detroit. This, along with other unfounded facts, were used by Cocker and Tennessee's Governor to rally support for a "no" vote on unionization. The vote was obviously a disappointing outcome for the UAW. Volkswagon's management had remained neutral, although it

has been reported that management also favored unionization. The vote also renewed the debate for unions and their place in the 21st century. The news — although not positive — inspires those of us who know the facts that labor and its fight on behalf of workers is what built the middle class. Solid wages and benefits gave many immigrant families the financial stability to allow their children to go to good schools and colleges so future generations could all share in the American dream.

A recent Huffington Post article detailed how hundreds of protestors tied up traffic in early March at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Pennsylvania, and came back again in the evening for more protests against one of the largest employers in the city. SEIU has been trying to organize workers at the hospital for several years but has faced resistance. The protest escalated a two-year showdown between labor groups and the area's largest employer. Joined by steel and mine workers, pro-union employees of UPMC marched to the hospital's headquarters with some specific demands: a hospital minimum wage of \$15, the elimination of employees' health care debts to the hospital and recognition of a union. Seems very reasonable to me; yet this is the type of situation labor is facing on a daily basis.

The New York State AFL-CIO posted on its Facebook page on February 17th the following quote from President John F. Kennedy: **"Our unions have fought for aid to education, for better housing, for development of our national resources and for saving the family-sized farms. They have spoken, not for narrow self-interest, but for the public interest and for the people."** I could not agree more.

This is one topic I will touch on briefly at our upcoming March meeting. It's the first one of the new year, and I encourage as many of you as possible to attend. There is quite a bit to bring you up to date on, and let you know where we are headed in the next couple of months. The March meeting is also our St. Patrick's Day celebration, so the food will be plentiful.

KOMNICK SCHOLARSHIP AWARD DEADLINE

Applications are now available for ACTIVE members to apply for our brother Lawrence Komnick Memorial Scholarship Award.

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, 2014**, and include an official transcript of SAT scores that is signed and verified by the high school. Members' dependent children graduating high school in June 2014 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 2014 General Membership Meeting.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thursday, **MARCH 20, 2014**

6:00 p.m.

St. Stanislaus Church
61-17 Grand Avenue
Maspeth, NY 11378

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

NEW MEMBERS

Lawrence Aldrich

Auto Mechanic — San

Thomas Bencebi

Auto Mechanic — San

Dimitrios Bletsas

Auto Mechanic — San

Patrick Carrara

Auto Mechanic — Fire

Sharron Farrar

Auto Mechanic — San

Alfred Flammia

Auto Mechanic — San

Rameshwar Harrichand

Auto Mechanic — San

John Morales

Auto Mechanic — San

Dewar Moran

Auto Mechanic — San

George Perumal

Auto Service Worker San

Yuvrajh Singh

Auto Mechanic — San

James Spear

Auto Mechanic — San

REPORT ILL

James Sottile Jr.

Ret. Auto Mechanic — Fire



GOOD & WELFARE

RETIRING MEMBERS

Mario Graziano

Auto Mechanic — San

Constantine Lydakis

Auto Mechanic — San

John Moore

Auto Mechanic — San

Brian Roach

Auto Mechanic — Pol

IN MEMORIAM

Donald Fleming

Ret. Auto Mechanic — Police

Milton Brown

Ret. Auto Mechanic — San

Robert Steyert

Ret. Auto Machinist — San

John Venios

Former Local 246 President
Machinist — San

Edward Wink

Ret. Auto Machinist — San

NEW BORN CHILDREN

Michael Arciuolo (Daughter)

Auto Service Worker — San

Eduardo Quinonez (Son)

Auto Mechanic Diesel — San

Robert Sokoloski (Daughter)

Motor Grade Operator — DOT

IN MEMORIAM FAMILY

Chaitram Balkissoon (Father)

Auto Mechanic — Fire

Michael DeRosa (son)

Auto Mechanic — Parks

CONGRATULATIONS



Congratulations to Michael Arciuolo (Auto Service Worker – San) and his wife Kerry on the birth of their daughter Riley Marie on February 10, 2014 at 8:15 a.m. Riley weighed 8 lbs. 4 oz. and was 19 1/4". She is welcomed by two big brothers, Nicholas and Matthew.



Congratulations to Robert Sokoloski (Motor Grade Operator – DOT) and his wife Jennifer on the birth of their daughter Dia Ann on February 3, 2014 at 8:15 p.m. in Richmond Medical Center. She weighed 6 lbs. 15 oz. and was 18 1/2". Dia Ann joins big brother Blake.



Congratulations to Eduardo Quinonez (Auto Mechanic Diesel – San) and his wife Sheena on the birth of their son Zackary, born on January 23, 2014 at 10:54 a.m. Zackary weighed 6 lbs. 11 oz. and was 20 inches long. He joins big sister Aliana.

NEWS & NOTES

REMINDER FOR RETIREE DUES — Retirees who have not paid their 2014 dues in the amount of \$60 should note that dues are NOW OVERDUE. We urge all retirees who forgot to send in their dues to do so immediately. After April 1, 2014, your name will be deleted from our mailing rosters. Dues checks should be payable to New York City Local 246 and sent to: NYC Local 246 SEIU, 217 Broadway, Suite 501, New York, NY 10007.

LAST CALL FOR INCOME TAX BENEFIT — Members who wish to take advantage of Local 246's Income Tax Benefit must do so by April 15, 2014. Contact Wendel-Walowitz Associates, at 212.682.6003 ext. 3 for information. Unless you make a specific appointment, the following are the last remaining scheduled dates: **Long Island:** Wednesday March 19 and Saturday April 5; **Queens:** Saturday, March 22. Tax returns must be filed electronically when available, and is included in the co-payment. If you choose not to file electronically, there will be a \$50 fee to cover the penalty imposed to our firm by New York State.

IMPORTANT REMINDER FOR MEDICARE-ELIGIBLE RETIREES ENROLLED IN APPROVED HMOs — NYC Local 246 will prepare the second half of 2013'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, 2013.

LOCAL 246 WEBSITE — The Union recently made some design modifications to the website, making it easier to navigate and find useful information, such as downloadable dental claim forms, up to date provides, optical benefits and much more. Log on to the Union's web site at www.nyclocal246.org

go to the "Members Only" section and put in your username and password

DENTAL CLAIM SUBMISSION — All dental claims should be filed with the Union's Dental Administrator. Claims should be sent to Healthplex, Inc., 333 Earle Ovington Blvd., Suite 300, Uniondale, NY 11553. Claims must be submitted within one year after completion of dental treatment. You can also visit their web site at www.healthplex.com at any time to view your account, or call their customer service department at 1-888-468-5178, option 1.

DOWNLOAD DENTAL CLAIM FORMS — Members can now download their dental claim forms and find a participating dentist by logging on the Union's web site at www.nyclocal246.org. Once you do find a dentist, please call the dentist to verify that s/he still participates with Heathplex.

2014 MEMBERSHIP CARDS — Active members received their 2014 membership cards with their January newsletter. Retirees will get theirs once 2014 dues have been paid. Any active member who did not receive a card with their January newsletter should contact the Union office.

DISCOUNT THEATER TICKETS — Are you up for rip roaring comedy, thrilling music, dance and exciting Broadway shows? The Theatre Development Fund (TDF) is offering discounts of up to 70% for members. Joining is easy. Go to www.tdf.org. Then click on TDF Membership.

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME — Daylight Savings Time began March 9. It's the perfect time to also change the batteries in your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. Too many lives have been lost simply because of non-working batteries. Don't become a victim.

UNION ROUNDUP

Local 246 met with Parks Department Acting Commissioner Liam Kavanaugh. Topics of discussion included the vehicle highlighted in the media, along with the Agency outsourcing of repairs, P.M.s and State Inspections. We proposed that the Agency review its policies and offered to work with them to achieve what we feel is a mutually beneficial solution to these issues. **After the meeting, Business Agent Tom Graziano was notified that after the Union appeal to address the pay inequity of the Service Workers, Parks decided to elevate all the Service Workers in Level I to Level II and also move them to top salary in the title. This is great news for those workers and we can't thank the Commissioner enough for coming through on behalf of our members.**

The Civil Service 220 Trades Coalition had a meeting February 27 to discuss our next step to reverse EO88 and develop a strategy to stop. Members met to discuss developments to date and the possible preparation if the Court will hear the case before we are able to resolve the issue.

Local 246 is working to schedule a meeting with elected officials on the issue of the Citywide parts contract and discuss the Union's concerns regarding not only how the contract was awarded, but the problems in implementation. We did have a labor-management meeting with Sanitation at the end of January to talk about the problems.

LET US KNOW:

If you have news you'd like to share with other members, send it to the Union Office for the publication in this newsletter. Birthdays. Graduations. Trips. Honors. Community Service. New babies. It's all good news to share with other members.

PUTTING STATE PENSION COSTS IN CONTEXT

Public pensions are under assault throughout the United States. We are led to believe that retirement costs for government workers are out of control. Governors and legislators in numerous states have been moving to cut benefits and tighten eligibility requirements. Although not yet a hot topic of discussion in New York, several other large states are on the bandwagon, including Pennsylvania, California, Florida and Illinois.

State lawmakers who are considering drastic cuts to the retirement benefits of state workers are simultaneously giving away billions of dollars in corporate tax subsidies and loopholes, often in amounts far exceeding the cost of pensions, according to a new report.

While it is true that numerous public pension systems are underfunded because of past decisions by policymakers and because the financial crisis harmed the value of pension-plan investments, that does not necessarily mean that the costs of benefits are excessive.

In a series of short papers, Good Jobs First, a non-profit, non-partisan research center focusing on economic development accountability, put current pension costs (known as employer normal costs) into comparative context. Focusing on 10 states where the pension cost controversy has been intense, they compared those costs to the amount of revenue those states lose each year as the result of economic development subsidies offered to corporations, as well as the tax preferences and accounting loopholes (including offshore tax havens) used by companies.

The findings show that in each state, the

Continued on page 7

2013 LOCAL 246 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

New York City Local 246
Condensed Statement of Income and Expenses
For the Calendar Year Ended December 31, 2013

Dues Income		\$1,171,020
Less: Per Capita and Affiliations		223,705
		947,315
Investment Income	\$ 1,898	
Sale of Apparel	256	
Miscellaneous Income	294	
Expense Reimbursements	4,188	
		6,636
<u>Total Income</u>		953,951
Expenses:		
Organizing	668,045	
Administrative	189,233	
Other Expenses	108,648	
		965,926
<u>Total Expenses</u>		965,926
Gain (Loss) for Period		\$ (11,975)

New York City Local 246
Statement of Assets and Liabilities
December 31, 2013

Assets:		
Cash - Checking Accounts		\$ 174,092
Investments - Fair Value		930,786
Prepaid Expenses		25,620
Accrued Interest Receivable		4,489
Fixed Assets - Net of Depreciation		46,599
Due From Retired Employees Welfare Fund		663
Due From Welfare Fund		0
Security Deposits		5,260
<u>Total Assets</u>		\$1,187,509
Liabilities:		
Due to Welfare Fund	\$ 29,623	
Accrued Expenses Payable		36,202
<u>Total Liabilities</u>		65,825
Net Worth - January 1, 2013	\$1,133,659	
Gain (Loss) for Period	(11,975)	
Net Worth - December 31, 2013		1,121,684
<u>Total Liabilities and Net Worth</u>		\$1,187,509

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DISCHARGE PETITION MAY FORCE A VOTE TO RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives filed a discharge petition that could force Speaker John Boehner to hold a vote to raise the minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$10.10. A discharge petition is a rarely used legislative maneuver that Democrats hope will bring the minimum wage debate to the floor. A raise in the minimum wage, a policy initiative supported by 71 percent of Americans, that wouldn't increase the federal budget, that would raise wages for 28 million workers, increase the GDP by \$22 billion, and create 85,000 new jobs, is sadly not a pressing matter worthy of a House debate.

PUTTING STATE PENSION COSTS IN CONTEXT

Continued from page 6

revenue lost to corporations through loopholes and tax breaks outpaces the current cost of pension benefits to state employees.

"In states across the country, politicians are attempting to solve the budget woes caused by Wall Street and the Great Recession by cutting the pension benefits of public employees," said Philip Mattera, Research Director of Good Jobs First. "It is often stated that budgets are a matter of priorities. And our research shows that corporate interests are generally prioritized over teachers, firefighters, police officers, and thousands of other employees who dedicate their lives to public service."

Pennsylvania loses nearly \$4 billion annually as a result of corporate subsidies and loopholes—more than two and half times the cost of public pensions. Pennsylvania's state pensions average a modest \$24,000 a year. In Michigan, corporations also enjoy about \$1.8 billion in subsidies and tax breaks — more than three times the cost of meeting the state's commitment to retirees.

The 10 states selected for analysis were chosen because their state legislatures are underfunding pensions or elected officials are threatening to cut pension benefits. Local 246 President Joe Colangelo said that in New York, public worker pensions are constantly under attack and are blamed by the media on a regular basis for contributing heavily to both the State's and the City's fiscal woes.

"It's not the pensions themselves that are the problem in any state," Colangelo said. "It's the fact that legislative leaders fail to properly plan and account for pension payouts when budgeting."

AUTOMOTIVE WORKER

25-YEAR/AGE 50 RETIREMENT PLAN

Local 246 recently received clarification from the New York City Employees Retirement System (NYCERS) that if a participant in the Automotive Workers 25 year, age 50 retirement plan works until age 62 and has accrued more than 30 years of credited service, his/her pension can be calculated under the Basic Tier 4 Plan, which provides an additional 1.5% for each year of credited service in excess of 30 years. This would equate to the removal of the 60 percent pension cap under the Automotive 25 Plan. For more information, contact the Pension Bureau at 347.643.3000.



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REMEMBER OUR TROOPS & PRAY FOR THEIR SAFETY

DAVIS-BACON ACT ANNIVERSARY

Davis-Bacon Act

March 3 marked the anniversary of the passage of the Davis-Bacon Act of 1931 — a United States federal law that established the requirement for paying the local prevailing wages on public works projects for laborers and mechanics.

Local 246 President Joe Colangelo said the Act, which applies to contractors and subcontractors performing on federally funded or assisted contracts in excess of \$2,000 for the construction, alteration, or repair (including painting and decorating) of public buildings or public works, was a major accomplishment for unions more than 80 years ago.

The act is named after its sponsors, James J. Davis, a Senator from Pennsylvania and a former Secretary of Labor under three presidents, and Representative Robert L. Bacon of Long Island, New York. The Davis-Bacon act was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Herbert Hoover on March 3, 1931.

The Davis-Bacon Act has been amended several times in its history. Almost immediately upon passage in 1931, both unions and contractors expressed dissatisfaction with key components of the law. Unions claimed that the law lacked enforcement teeth, while contractors pointed out that it was impossible to know beforehand what the prevailing wages were when submitting bids.

President Hoover issued Executive Order 5778, clarifying some of the enforcement mechanisms, and Congress considered amendments that were vetoed before Hoover left office.

The Davis-Bacon Act covers four main areas of construction: residential, heavy, buildings, and highway. Within these areas are further classifications, including craft positions such as plumber, carpenter, cement mason/concrete finisher, electrician, insulator, laborer, lather, painter, power equipment operator, roofer, sheet metal worker, truck driver, and welder.

In addition to the federal law, several other jurisdictions have passed "Little Davis-Bacon" laws, including New York, which has no threshold amount.

"This Act is the foundation for the 220 Prevailing Rate that the Trades unions enjoy up until this day," Colangelo said.