

IMPACT

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LOCAL 246 LAUNCHES NEW

facebook



AND



twitter

PAGES



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Local 246 has entered the social media front with the introduction of a new Facebook page and Twitter account. President Joe Colangelo said it was time for the Union to start promoting to the general public the dedication and commitment of members.

"So many unions now use Facebook and Twitter to get out their messages. It's the age of social media and if we are going to continue to be a leading voice in the New York City labor movement, we needed to do the same," Colangelo said. "It's something that the Executive Board has been discussing and now that we have taken the leap, we hope our members get on board and provide

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Catching up with Aldo



Front Lines of Snow Equipment



DEP Ashokan Visit

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Message from President JOSEPH A. COLANGELO



The first expected blizzard of 2015 turned out to be the first major weather flop of 2015. According to the weather reports on January 26, we were going to receive up to three feet of snow, the worst the City had seen since record keeping started back in the 1800s. Of course, we all know how that turned out.

Forecasters all agreed this was to be “snow-megedan”. The Governor, after meeting with MTA officials, decided to shut down mass transit, and the Mayor and Sanitation Commissioner advised everyone to stay off the roads and if possible to start their evening commute early. No one was to be on the roads except for emergency vehicles. The hype over the storm was unprecedented. While most downstate

residents were running to stores, stocking their shelves, and figuring out ways to get home quickly, Local 246 members had other things on their minds — finding ways to get into work or stay at work in order to be on hand to fix the multitude of emergency vehicles that undoubtedly would need repair in order to keep the City rolling.

We knew that we were going to be part of a small handful of the population that was going to be on the roads and not be fined. We are the dedicated civil servants who keep New York City rolling. We are the backbone of every emergency service agency that would not be able to do their jobs to the fullest if we did not do ours to the fullest.

We had members who stayed at work sleeping at some locations because of travel concerns and fear they would not be able to make it back in the following morning. This shows our dedication and commitment to the job. However, this is not something that the media reports. The sacrifices by all civil servants finding ways to get in to work while most others were scrambling to get home from work fall on deaf ears. These news stories are the ones that go unnoticed and unreported. Everyone expects roads

SEND US YOUR EMAIL TO

Local 246 is in the process of implementing an email blast system that will be used to inform members of important news in the most timely manner. **Those who are interested can sign up to receive the emails by providing the Union with a personal email address, as well as both first and last names.** President Joe Colangelo said that as information is received, it will be entered into a data base and as topics arise that members should be notified of, an email will be sent out. He said all addresses will be kept strictly confidential, will only be utilized for purposes of the email blast system, and will not be sold or provided to any outside party.

“We thought this would be a great method of disseminating information as quickly as possible since almost everyone these days has email and receives it on their smart phones,” Colangelo said. He stressed that this program is optional and that members can opt out at any time by clicking in the link that will be provided in all emails sent from the Union.

to be cleared and emergency calls to be responded to, but no one thinks about the human element involved in getting that all done. Wouldn't it be nice if the media followed a Local 246 member who is up well before the crack of dawn to make sure their car is plowed out so that they can get to work on time — not taking a snow day off — so others can get out on the streets?

We don't complain about our jobs because these are the jobs we choose to do. We are there when we are needed. Whether it's a weather emergency, the tragic events of 9/11 or Hurricane Sandy — events that keep most in their homes — we are the ones who know the importance of the services we provide. The United States Postal Service motto has always been "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of the appointed rounds" most certainly applies to Local 246 members and all civil servants as well.

And while that first snow storm didn't pan out, the second one did. Without blinking an eye, our members were right there on the job, keeping emergency vehicles serviced and repaired so they could get back out on the roads as quickly as possible. Now that is recognition anyone deserves.

Which brings me to another topic — the Governor's State of the State address, which I attended in Albany. While he spoke of his goals and agenda for the year, he included little about organized labor and the part we all play in state government. He did lay out an ambitious social agenda that focused on the erosion of confidence in the criminal justice system and public schools and teachers that he said are failing students. These two topics will have affected unions up in arms but other than that, there appeared to be not much else on his radar screen for labor, as of yet anyway. Needless to say, it is an area we will be closely monitoring as the session unfolds.

It remains to be seen just how much will actually get accomplished during this legislative session anyway. With tremendous upheaval in the leadership ranks that kicked off the year and resulted in a changing of the guard, many are wondering just how much of what the Governor is proposing will encounter stiff opposition in what is a truly divided legislature with Republicans in full control of the Senate and Democrats dominating the State Assembly.

Working with our Lobbyist Robert Ungar, we will be submitting our 25/50 opt out bill this legislative session and look forward to its passage. It's a bill whose time has come and we are hopeful that with some determined lobbying efforts, we will be successful. We know that contract talks are foremost on everyone's minds and I just want to let you know that negotiations are progressing. It's the larger unions that negotiate first and with many of them well underway, we know we are inching closer. Since we have no General Membership Meeting in February, if there is something to report, we will get that information out through our Shop Stewards.

Urgent matter such as these are one of the reasons we are beginning now to collect e-mail addresses from members who are interested in being a part of our e-mail blast system. We will be utilizing this system as a method of getting information out in the most timely fashion, whether it be updates on contract talks, news about an urgent meeting, a schedule of upcoming events, or reminders about meetings. We will not use your email address for other purposes, nor will we sell or give it to third parties. If you are interested in signing up, see the bottom of page 2 for information on how to do so. Local 246 is moving into the social media and technologic era with our introduction on Facebook and Twitter, as well as the email blast system. We are proud of our advancement, and hope you will be as well. Be sure to let us know what you think.



Local 246 SEIU Joe Colangelo, Lobbyist Robert Ungar and his associate Kristen Curran, and State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli after the Governor's State of the State address.

RECEIVE UNION NEWS

Local 246 will continue to publicize newsworthy topics and events at monthly General Membership Meetings, via Shop Stewards, and on the website. "This is just another way Local 246 is bringing the Union into the technological era," Colangelo said. "We know that everyone's email inboxes get flooded with spam so while we will be utilizing the system on a regular basis, we will be selective in what we send out."

Anyone interested in receiving the blasts should email their personal email address to nyc246seiu@nyclocal246.org. This address should not be used to contact the Union for anything other than signing up for the email blast.

NO MEETING IN FEBRUARY

Reminder that there are no General Membership Meeting in February. President Joe Colangelo said that if there is an urgent matter that needs to be brought to members' attention, a special notice will be posted on the Union's website or mailed out. Regular monthly meetings will resume in March. Members can continue to visit the Union's web site at www.nyclocal246.org for information.

IN MEMORIAM MEMBERS

Anthony Barbagallo

Ret. Auto Mechanic Diesel— San

Nils Olson

Ret. Sheet Metal Worker — HHC

NEW MEMBERS

Hemchand Bhadrasain

Machinist — DOE

Juan Hans

Auto Electrician — San

Jesus Irizarry

Auto Electrician — San

Heron Khan

Auto Electrician — San

Matthew Kujawa

Auto Mechanic — San

Smith Pierre

Auto Mechanic — San

Salvador Rios

Auto Electrician — San

David Sullam

Auto Mechanic — San

Maurice Vieux

Rubber Tire Repairer — San

Samuel Vilain

Auto Service Worker — Police

Kurulgan Yetkin

Auto Mechanic — San

GOOD & WELFARE



RETIRING MEMBERS

John Evangelista

Auto Mechanic — Fire

William McDonough

Auto Mechanic — DOT

John Scheie

Auto Mechanic — Parks

Michael Merslich

Auto Mechanic — Police

IN MEMORIAM FAMILY

John Caroccia (Grandmother)

Auto Mechanic — San

Mordechai Ziv (Mother)

Shop Steward

Auto Mechanic Diesel — DOT

www.nyclocal246.org

SEIU 2014-2015 SCHOLARSHIPS

SEIU is offering 51 college scholarships each year. Only members of SEIU and their children are eligible to apply. Application information is available at www.seiu.org/mbe/scholarships or by contacting the Scholarship Program at the SEIU Scholarship Programs, c/o Scholarship Program Administrators Inc., P.O. Box 23737, Nashville, TN 37202-3737. You may also call (615) 320-3149.

Aldo Lorelli Keeps Busy in Retirement



Dear Mr. Colangelo,

It has been a while since I wrote, but I wanted to let you know how we are doing and wish everyone a happy and prosperous New Year. I was sick from June 2014 to December 2014, but I am doing much better now with the help of medication. The doctor has now given me the okay to travel, so my wife Patricia is booking cruises and airline flights to different destinations.

We will be flying to San Diego, CA to visit our son, a major in the Marines, and his family for the Easter vacation before he is deployed again. We have booked a cruise in May to Bermuda for seven days on a Norwegian Cruise ship.

We are looking into a sea and land cruise to Alaska in 2016, but haven't made definite plans yet. Our Thanksgiving was special because my brother Guglielmo and his wife Mary came in from Arizona to spend it with the family at my home in Pennsylvania. For Christmas, my wife and I travelled to Staten Island to be with my family. My sister Mary Eikeseth and the family surprised me with a birthday cake for my 69th birthday, which was in January.

This summer we are hoping family from Italy will be coming to visit with us. We are also looking forward to Thanksgiving in Canada in October with family. We will send you additional photos of our trips when we return from them. Wishing you and your staff the best of everything in 2015.

Sincerely,

Aldo M. Lorelli

NEWS & NOTES

LAWRENCE KOMNICK MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD — Active Member applications to apply for the Lawrence Komnick Memorial Scholarship Award are now available. 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 while performing a truck inspection. To receive an application for dependent children, Active members can call the Union Office. The scholarship is a one-time \$1,000 award. Applicants must be completed and postmarked by April 30, 2015, 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 2015 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 2015 General Membership Meeting.

2015 MEMBERSHIP CARDS — Active members received their 2015 cards with their January newsletter. Retirees will get theirs in a separate mailing once their dues have been paid. Any active member who did not find a card with their newsletter should contact the office.

UNION WEBSITE — The Union's website contains numerous downloadable forms for members' use, and has various links to useful information. Please visit the site at www.nyclocal246.org regularly for important updates. Please call the Union office if you don't know your user name and password.

RETIREE DUES FOR 2015 — Retiree dues for 2015 were payable in full by the end of January. If you have not already done so, please send a check or money order for \$60 made payable to New York City Local 246. Dues can be mailed to

SEIU Local 246, 217 Broadway, Suite 501, New York, NY 10007. Once your retiree dues are received, you will be mailed a 2015 membership card. Thank you.

INCOME TAX BENEFIT — Members who wish to take advantage of Local 246's income Tax benefit must do so by April 15, 2015. The benefit is administered by the accounting firm of Wendel-Walowitz Associates, Inc. This benefit is available to both Active and Retired members of Local 246. Members will be able to file their returns electronically. Those who file electronically will receive their refunds in about half the time of paper returns. The schedule for 2015 appeared in the January issue of the IMPACT and is also on the Local 246 website. Call their office at 212.682.6003 for more information.

COMPARE DRUG PRICES — Visit New York's drug comparison website at www.rx.nyhealth.gov for the most up to date information on drug prices and where you can find the best bargains.

CITIZENS RX PREFERRED FORMULARY — The 2015 Citizens RX National Preferred Formulary is now available on the Local 246 website at 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. The list is not all-inclusive and does not guarantee coverage. In addition to using this list, you are encouraged to ask your doctor to prescribe generic drugs when-ever appropriate. An asterisk next to a drug signifies it is subject to non-formula status when a generic is available. Not all the drugs are covered by all prescription-drug benefit programs. Check your benefit materials for the specific drugs covered and co-payments for your prescription drug benefit program. For specific question about your coverage, please call the

phone number printed on your ID card.

ONLY MEDICARE-ELIGIBLE RETIREES ENROLLED IN APPROVED HMOs — Only Medicare-Eligible Retirees Enrolled in Approved HMOs. NYC Local 246 will prepare the second half of 2014'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, 2014-December 30, 2014

PARTICIPATING DENTISTS — To find a participating dentist in your area, go to the Local 246 website under Healthplex Dental Benefit. Log into member search and enter the group number. The group number for Active members is GG-493A and Retiree members the group number is GG-493R dentist's participation is subject to change. Therefore, when you call for your appointment, be sure to give them the group number to verify that the dentist is currently participating with the Fund.

COLLEGE LETTERS DUE BY FEBRUARY 15 – 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. A letter that is signed dated and bears the seal of the College Registrar, stating that the dependent is a full-time, matriculated student is required as proof of eligibility for the prescription benefit. The benefit will total \$500 per calendar year, inclusive of all your eligible dependent children. For dependents whose letters have expired will not be honored. Dates on all claims must correspond with semesters for payment.

VISITING MECHANICS ON FRONT LINES OF SNOW EQUIPMENT

Rain, sleet, snow or hail, Local 246 members are always on the job making sure that the City's emergency vehicles are fully operational in times of emergency. Such was the case during the first "snowstorm" of the year that never panned out, as well as the real one that followed. "No matter what the weather conditions, our members are at work, doing their jobs to the best of their ability to ensure that New York City functions. As others scramble to get home before a storm kicks in, Local 246 members find ways to get in to work so that all emergency response vehicles can be on the road doing the job they need to do," said President Joe Colangelo.



Pictured above left with Colangelo are Sanitation Bronx 2 members Auto Mechanic Diesel Frank Klonowski and Auto Mechanic Wojciech Krawczyk. Above right are members from the Sanitation Bronx 1, 3 & 4 Shop: Auto Mechanic Ray Saareste, Auto Mechanic Diesel Joe Acocella, and Auto Mechanic Manny Nieves.

CITY HALL CLAIMS PROGRESS TOWARD HEALTH CARE SAVINGS

The de Blasio Administration believes it is on track to save \$400 million in municipal health-care costs this fiscal year — a requirement included in the contracts the city has settled with its municipal unions over the past year. Bob Linn, commissioner for the Office of Labor Relations, and Claire Levitt, the deputy commissioner overseeing this project, detailed the savings in a recent letter to de Blasio and first deputy mayor Tony Shorris.

"The Office of Labor Relations is pleased to report that at the end of the second quarter of fiscal 2015, it is projecting that these efforts are on track to meet the goal of \$400 million in savings for fiscal year 2015," reads the memo. "This anticipated success in attaining the first round of savings supports O.L.R.'s confidence that the fiscal year 2016 goal and the four-year, \$3.4 billion goal are attainable."

To reach the target, the unions and City Hall have agreed to restructure a "care management program" which involves, among other things, a reassessment of high hospital readmission rates to reduce costly repeat visits through better initial medical care.

The Municipal Labor Committee, an umbrella organization representing city unions, also agreed to renegotiate a contract with Express Scripts, which sells specialty drugs to city employees. The change, which followed an audit of the program, will "provide substantial savings to the city," according to the memo.

In the upcoming fiscal year, the city intends to flesh out a plan to encourage workers to use urgent care clinics instead of more expensive hospital emergency rooms. One option would be increasing co-payments at E.R.s, while lowering them in clinics. Other options for savings will include programs that encourage better health choices to avoid future sicknesses. After a free flu shot program for all city employees last year, Linn is considering programs that help workers quit smoking and promote exercise and nutrition.

Harry Nespoli, MLC Chair, said in a statement to unions: "The Office of Labor Relations reports that at the end of the second quarter of FY 2015, we are on track to meet our target. The Municipal Labor Committee will continue to make progress to reach our goals." — *information from Capital New York*

LOCAL 246 LAUNCHES NEW

facebook



AND  twitter PAGES

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us with shop photos and news we can use."

Colangelo said the Union hopes to post photos as well as news-worthy items of interest not only to members, their families and friends, but also the general public.

"All the masses ever hear and read about via the media is that organized labor is a drain on the budgets of all governments, no matter their size. It's about time all unions, Local 246 included, promote the good we do as well, like being the small minority of workers finding ways to get in to work during a snow storm instead of finding ways to get home. We need to publicize the benefits we provide and if we don't tout ourselves, no one else will."

Colangelo said he hopes all members with Facebook will like the new page and that those with Twitter accounts will follow Local 246 and retweet messages that the Union posts. "The more we can get our name and message out to the general public, the better off everyone will be," he said.

In addition, Local 246 is initiating an email blast system whereby members can choose to provide a personal email address at which to receive urgent news and messages from the Local. Information on how to sign up for this system can be found on page 2 of this newsletter.

"There are often times when we have to get news out to our members in the fastest way possible. Since almost everyone these days has some type of smart phone, personal email is easily and readily accessible," Colangelo said. "This is, of course, optional for members and will only be used for news from Local 246. No one's email address will be used for any other reason and members will have the opportunity to opt out at any time if they choose."

Colangelo said the Union is excited about all the changes and improvements in communication. "This is 2015. If we are going to keep up, this is the route we needed to take."



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REMEMBER OUR TROOPS & PRAY FOR THEIR SAFETY

UPSTATE MEMBERS AT DEP ASHOKAN

When President Joe Colangelo made his annual trek to Albany for the Governor's State of the State address, he once again visited the Ashokan Reservoir Shop to catch up with members working at this facility. Local 246 represents 14 DEP members in upstate New York at this and one other location in Grahamsville.

"We always want our out-of-New York City members to know that they are just as important to the Union," Colangelo said. "While we are available for them at all times, same as we are for our City members, stopping by in person is important to us so we can hear and see firsthand how things are going at their shops. In addition, the out-of-New York City contract is just one of the many we are negotiating this year and we want to be sure that we include all their needs and concerns before we hit the bargaining table."

Pictured are DEP Auto Mechanics Dwayne Albright and Anthony Boe.

