

IMPACT

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AWARD CEREMONY FOR DOT EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Four Local 246 members were honored recently for their exemplary work and commitment in the Department of Transportation.

"Whenever our members get honored for outstanding service, commitment to their jobs, or going above and beyond, it shines not only on them as individuals, but also on Local 246 as the union representing them," said Union Recording Secretary Anthony Reyes. "The



members recognized by the Department of Transportation are true examples of what it means to be a dedicated municipal worker."

Pictured from left: **Eugene McNeil** (Auto Machinist), 25 Years of Service; **Matthew Reno** (Supervisor, Sheet Metal Worker), 30 Years of Service; DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg; **Robert Urbanski** (Sheet Metal Worker), 30 Years of Service; **Joseph Buzzel** (Motor Grader Operator), 30 Years of Service; Local 246 Recording Secretary Anthony Reyes; and Shop Steward Peter Tucci.



New Shop Steward

4



Air Force Historial Society

7



Learning on the Job

8

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Message from President JOSEPH A. COLANGELO



Last month I discussed the Supreme Court's ruling on *Freidrichs vs. California Teachers Association* and what that ruling means in regard to the continuing attacks on labor. That case was just one in a numerous barrage of aggressive actions taking place against organized labor that started in full force only a handful of years ago.

As yet another example of politicians and businesses trying to destroy unions, we need look no further than the blitz on Verizon workers by management that has forced more than 40,000 of their members out on strike.

Some interesting facts to note. Verizon unionized workers account for just under 23 percent of a total Verizon workforce of 178,000. Workers on strike are not in Verizon's wireless division, but are in the old landline part of the company. That same workforce has gone on strike against the company in 1983, 1986, 1989, 1998, 2000, 2004, 2011 and now. While the issues and cause for strike might have changed throughout time, a good portion of the strike now deals with outsourcing the work these employees do in call centers. Some of the previous strikes centered around benefits and pensions, but no matter what the issue or cause for concern, Verizon as a company does not look at its employees as an integral part of the overall structure.

To give you an idea of the outsourcing issue, in the 2000 strike, Verizon had 85,000 workers in this division, which is now down to less than half of that total. Part of this new strike is because Verizon wants to further reduce its workforce. While it would seem that the fight is internal between Verizon as a company and its employees, that would be incorrect.

SON OF AUTO MECHANIC NEEDS SERVICE DOG

Four-year-old Kenny, son of **Auto Mechanic Keith Grunenberg (San)** was born with two medical conditions that require his parents to monitor his blood sugar throughout the day — and night. That's why they are trying to raise the \$15,000 needed to get Kenny a service dog and allow him to gain some independence. Service dogs are trained to detect when blood sugar drops to dangerously low levels. The service dog would even be with Kenny at school, open doors for him as he's in a wheelchair, help him pick up items from the floor and turn on and off lights. To help in any way you can, go to www.first-giving.com/fundraiser/Amanda-Grunenberg/kennysdogpage. No donation is too small. Says Kenny: "Having a service dog will change my life in so many great ways!"

The fight at Verizon is just the latest attack on labor. With globalization of the workforce, it is much easier for corporations to move back-office operations outside the U.S. Verizon profits are widely known the wireless division reported \$91.7 billion — that's billion with a "B" — in revenue with a profit of nearly \$30 billion — with a "B". The division the workers are in is less profitable because that is the older land lines and that part of the company's revenue was reported at around \$2.2 billion. Not too shabby in my mind.

While the media expectedly has routinely sided with Verizon management, one retired Communications Workers of America member responded with a letter to the editor and summed it all up perfectly:

You call us "walk-offs." I call it fighting for your family against corporate greed. The CWA built Verizon into the great company it is today. In the aftermath of 9/11, the CWA got Wall Street back in service in six days — rebuilding Verizon's main hub in the shadows of those magnificent towers. Time and again the CWA has responded in time of need, not greed — Hurricane Sandy, the Second Avenue Fire in 1975, Hurricane Gloria, etc. We did our job to get the customers back in service. It doesn't seem prudent that a ... company that makes over \$1 billion a month in profits should nickel and dime its best assets — its workers."

And this is the crux of the problem across the country. Business relies on its workers for profits, but does not share in the wealth. On a routine basis, it takes instead of gives.

The country's landscape is littered with shuttered factories throughout the Midwest from steel plants and textile mills and auto plants. As companies restructure and open new facilities, the automation of these new plants requires fewer workers to run them. We all have seen those fancy commercials of robots putting together everything from gadgets to cars. As the saying goes, robots don't need sick days or pay raises and medical benefits either.

Maybe all companies should take a lesson from the founder and CEO of Chobani yogurt. Hamdi Ulukaya announced that

he would be giving all of his 2,000 full-time workers awards that could be worth up to 10% of the privately held company's future value if it goes public or is sold. Each employee will be given "Chobani Shares" or award units, based on the workers' tenure and role at the company, which could be converted to cash or shares in the event of an initial public offering or a sale. The value of the awards are dependent on company performance, however, and have the potential to be worth nothing if Chobani doesn't meet performance metrics.

The award was not a gift but "a mutual promise to work together with a shared purpose and responsibility," he wrote in a memo to employees. "How we built this company matters to me, but how we grow it matters even more. I want you to be a part of this growth — I want you to be the driving force of it."

The world has been changing for some time, but technology is moving at such a rapid rate that jobs that may have taken a decade or two to disappear sometimes disappear overnight and cities, towns and families are left to pick up the pieces.

Organized labor and unions have always been the voice for the working class this has been true since the start of the industrial revolution when new factories required lots of workers to run. Unions were formed to give workers a voice and band together to lift everyone up. In today's modern age where fewer workers are needed, it becomes easier for corporations to shut out unions. The profits these company's make is obscene, with numbers unheard of since the dynasties of the Rockefellers and Carnegie.

The new wealth that is being created is going to fewer and fewer people and these profits are not helping society as a whole.

Unions are fighting for their survival and the attacks on public sector unions will not end. We must remain united. If you happen to pass a Verizon picket line, take a moment to stand with our brothers and sisters; we all need to support each other in our fights.

As Benjamin Franklin was quoted as saying "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

LOCAL 246 SOCIAL MEDIA



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SEIU Local 246



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GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thursday, **MAY 19, 2016**

6:00 p.m.

St. Stanislaus Church

61-17 Grand Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378

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

IN MEMORIAM MEMBERS

Wendell Reid

Ret. Machinist Helper — DEP

IN MEMORIAM FAMILY

John Matthews, Jr. (Mother)

Auto Electrician — DOT

Edwin Bruce (Father)

Sheet Metal Worker — DOC

RETIRING MEMBERS

Joseph Barone

Auto Mechanic — San

Michael Figliola

Auto Mechanic — San

NEW BORN CHILDREN

Michael Blacksberg (Son)

Auto Mechanic — San

SEND US YOUR NEWS

If you have an interesting hobby, and volunteer your time, or have anything you think might make a good feature story in our newsletter, please send the information to the Union office for possible publication in the IMPACT.

We are also looking for news on members' special birthday, children's graduations, trips, honors, new births and community service.

Be sure to include photos, as well as daytime and evening phone numbers where you can be reached if we should have any questions.

GOOD & WELFARE



NEW MEMBERS

Antonio Brown

Machinist — San

Michael DeRosa

Sheet Metal Worker — Police

Michael Doman

Auto Mechanic — Housing

Joshua Dunn

Auto Mechanic — San

Alfred Falcone

Auto Mechanic — Fire

Jonathan Fronterre

Auto Mechanic — San

Sebastian Musca

Auto Mechanic — San

Kareem O'Connor

Auto Mechanic — San

Andrew Raghunauth

Auto Mechanic — San

Gerald Smith

Auto Mechanic — San

Thamashwar Veerasawmy

Machinist — DOE

CONGRATS TO OUR NEWEST SHOP STEWARD

Congratulations to Jason Vetter (Auto Mechanic), newly elected Queens Borough Shop Steward. Vetter can be reached at 718.334.8977. He replaces Jack Minerva, who was recently appointed as a Union Trustee.

Vetter started working for the City in 2000, and previously served as a Shop Steward. "We look forward to once again working with Jason to serve members in the Queens Borough Shop," said President Joe Colangelo.



APRIL GIFT CARD WINNERS

Congratulations to the following members who were winners of the gift card raffle at the April membership meeting:

Antonino Brucculeri

Auto Body Worker — Police

Anthony Guerrero

Sheet Metal Worker — DCAS

Michael Moscato

Auto Mechanic — Parks

Matthew Reno

Supervisor Sheet Metal Worker — DOT

John Sucich

Auto Mechanic — DOT

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for the latest news

NEWS & NOTES

KOMNICK SCHOLARSHIP — The drawing for the Lawrence Komnick Scholarship Awards will take place at our May 2016 membership meeting.

MEMORIAL DAY — As you celebrate Memorial Day at the end of May, please remember our troops who died in active military duty while serving our Country and pray for those still serving overseas protecting our freedoms.

ANNUITY FUND PLAN ADMINISTRATOR — The plan administrator for the Local 246 Annuity Fund is Administrative Services Only. We recommend you visit their website — www.asonet.com/annuity — periodically to review your contribution history and to verify that your account is being credited properly. You should periodically check that you have the proper beneficiary designation on file. If you do not complete a beneficiary form, the Fund will make the distribution according to rules it may adopt. If you have any question please call ASO at 877.999.3555.

COBRA APPLICATIONS — If you are no longer in active pay status you may not be eligible for health benefits and/or welfare benefits. You must purchase these benefits directly through the COBRA program for welfare benefits you should contact the union office. For health benefits you should contact the agency benefits coordinator. You must enroll within 60 days from the qualifying event.

UPDATE YOUR DUES CARD — Members who change title or transfer to another agency are required to fill out a new dues authorization card. Ask your Shop Steward for a new card to fill out or call the Union at 212.233.0616. Once it is filled out, please return it to the Union office.

ACTIVE MEMBER SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS — Federal Law recently enacted in conjunction with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act mandates certain reports that must be filed with the

Internal Revenue Service. A letter of explanation was mailed to all active members. It MUST be filled out, signed, and returned to the Local 246 office. We included a self-addressed stamped envelope for your convenience. Any active member who did not receive this letter should contact the Union office immediately.

NEW MEMBERS — New members must send us a copy of their marriage certificate and/or dependent(s) birth certificate(s). Members who are divorced must send us a copy of their divorce papers. You will be responsible for any outstanding bills your spouse/domestic partner submits for reimbursement that they are not entitled to.

AUTOMOTIVE HIGH SCHOOL SPRING CAR SHOW — The annual car show will be on Saturday, June 4 from 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at Automotive High School, 50 Bedford Avenue in Brooklyn. The show is open to all makes and models. No pre-registration is required. There is onsite registration of \$5 per vehicle with all proceeds benefitting after school programs at AHS. For more information, you can go to automotivehs.com. There is a map on the website of how to approach the school to get to the lot where show will take place. There is capacity for about 150 vehicles.

FUNDS EXTEND COVERAGE TO ACTIVE MEMBER'S CHILDREN UP TO 26 — You may enroll dependents at the time they are becoming 19 years old, or at the time they lose benefits from their own or spouse/domestic partner's benefits. There is a time limit of 31 days from reaching age 19, or loss of other benefits. If you miss the time limit, you will have to wait until the following January 1st.

CITIZENS RX PREFERRED FORMULARY — The 2016 Citizens RX National Preferred Formulary is available on the Local 246 website at www.nyclocal246.org. The list contains the most commonly prescribed drugs and is an abbreviated version of the

list (formulary) that is at the core of your prescription-drug benefit plan. 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 nonformula 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 on your ID card.

MERMAID PARADE — The 34th annual Mermaid Parade is scheduled for June 18 at 1:00 p.m. in Coney Island in Brooklyn. The Mermaid Parade is the largest art parade in the nation and showcases more than 3,000 creative individuals from all over the five boroughs and beyond, opening the summer with incredible art, entrepreneurial spirit and community pride. This creates an artistic framework on which artists can improvise, resulting in the flourishing of frivolity, dedication, pride, and personal vision that has become how New York celebrates summer. For more information, visit www.coneyisland.com/programs/mermaid-parade

ONLY MEDICARE-ELIGIBLE RETIREES ENROLLED IN APPROVED HMOS — Local 246 will prepare the second half of 2015'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-Dec. 31, 2015.

COPE RAFFLE WINNER — Winner of the 50/50 Cope Raffle for April 2016 was **Richard Rejhon** (Auto Mechanic — DOT).

DOES THE VERIZON STRIKE SIGNAL A RESURGENCE OF LABOR?

Reprinted in part from Portside Labor — The ongoing strike by nearly 40,000 Verizon workers — the largest work stoppage in the United States in recent years — is a bold fight against the kind of strategies that big corporations have used for decades to maximize profits at the expense of workers.

In the case of Verizon, the tactics the company has already used, and is pushing to intensify in its new contract, include offshoring good jobs to countries such as the Philippines, India and Mexico; outsourcing work domestically to low-wage, non-union contractors; forcibly transferring workers away from their families; and fiercely combating employees trying to organize in the company's almost entirely non-union wireless side.

Like the Verizon strikers, the low-wage workers in the "Fight for \$15" movement have also been striking to stand up to assaults from big corporate employers, and they just won historic minimum wage increases in both California and New York.

Even as the company has made record profits — \$39 billion over the past three years — its workers' benefits have been slashed and their numbers have fallen.

The growing gap between company profits and employee compensation reflects the

shifting balance of power in employment relations. In the 30 years after World War II, when unions had a significant presence in the workplace, productivity and wages grew in tandem, creating a strong middle class in the United States.

But four decades ago, that employment relationship began to be restructured. It was prompted by a confluence of events, including globalization and technological change. And those forces were exacerbated by political decisions that led to the deregulation of markets, the growing financialization of the economy and employer assaults on unions, especially in the private sector.

In the contentious negotiations that led up to the strike, Verizon executives justified their actions, saying they reflect the inexorable outcomes of technological change (in this case, from landlines toward wireless cellphones) and of market forces over which they have little control.

For instance, Verizon's union workers install the company's state-of-the-art FiOS high-speed broadband service. But instead of investing fully in that new technology, Verizon has been remarkably slow to roll it out.

Meanwhile, there is a management bias against unions in Verizon's wireless side

that has blocked workers from organizing. Currently, the average customer service representative on the wireline side makes \$69,000 a year, while a wireless representative doing much the same work makes \$45,000 a year.

In 2014, workers in Verizon Wireless retail stores in New York and Massachusetts sought to close that gap and voted to form a union. But two years later the company still refuses to reach a fair first contract. That is one of the key disputes in this strike.

The actions by the Verizon workers show that it is possible to fight back against the power of employers to dictate the terms of the employment relationship. A shift in the balance of power between employers and workers has occurred before in U.S. history, most notably when the reactions to the first Gilded Age helped to create the conditions that led eventually to the New Deal and the restoration of greater equality in the three decades after World War II.

These events taught us about the potential of concerted political action to change course. Then, as now, political will — coupled with worker action — offers the promise of a middle-class revival that this country needs.

A FRIEND IN CONGRESS SENATOR SCHUMER SHOWS SUPPORT

President Joe Colangelo had an impromptu meeting with New York State Senator Charles Schumer when the two bumped into each other at a recent union event.

"Senator Schumer is a huge supporter of organized labor and has always been someone we can turn to," Colangelo said. "He talks all the time about how there is labor running through his family's veins and how much he values the contributions organized labor makes."

Colangelo said the Senator briefly asked how things were going with Local 246 and made it clear that he stands strong with our members.

"In today's tough political climate, where politicians often use labor as a scapegoat, it's reassuring to know that there are some politicians who truly are our friends," Colangelo said. "He appreciates how hard our members work to support their families and what a great job we do in keeping New York City's huge motor fleet operational at all times."



UNION ROUNDUP

The Union Active and Retiree Welfare Funds' audits were held on April 19. All checks and receipts were in order and the Funds remain financially stable. After two years of the Affordable Care Act, the Funds are still able to provide benefits even while some smaller unions have stopped. The Trustees are looking into ways to try and stay ahead of increasing prescription drug costs.

Local 246 met with OLR on April 5 to start discussions on tool protection language and our non-economic agreement. We are scheduling additional follow-up meetings to discuss our concerns, as well as meetings on ARI and NYPD.

The Union did a walk through at DEP Tallman Island plant that Vice President Jim Grillo and the Shop Steward both attended. Tallman Island recently redid the engine room and converted it to gas powered turbines, with all diesel engines being removed.

The Union was successful in our arbitration against NYPD for a Service Worker

regarding out of title work. The arbitrator agreed with our case that the Service Worker was performing the work of an Auto Mechanic. The Agency now owes our member the difference in the rate of pay between the two titles dating back to the filing of the grievance more than two years ago. The Union has two more cases against the Department with Step III hearings that took place in mid April; we are awaiting a decision.

The MLC sub-committee met to discuss an ongoing problem with Education & Experience exams. There is always a large number of individuals who have a tie score that creates a difficulty when trying to institute the Civil Service rule of one of three. If multiple people have the same exam score, then the agency can randomly choose any of those with that score, thereby negating the usefulness of the rule.

The 220 Trades Coalition met with Department of Corrections in early April and was told that the DOC will be hir-

ing more trades staff, carpenters, electricians, operating engineers, sheet metal workers and painters as they undergo a program to rehabilitate the buildings on Rikers Island. We will continue to meet quarterly and develop a working relationship with the Agency as they increase hiring to complete their renovation projects.

Local 246 held negotiations on our MGO and Tractor Operator contracts. We are closer to a settlement and by the next meeting, hope to have both contracts settled.

The 220 Trades Coalition met with HHC because the contract with Johnson Controls to manage the facilities is being cancelled at the end of June. This was the nine-year contract that the Bloomberg Administration instituted that in our opinion was a failure from the start. HHC also will be adding staff and the quarterly meetings we hold in part discuss staffing. HHC Sheet Metal staff has dropped from 24 to six.

AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY DAVID LEVITT IS GUEST SPEAKER

Auto Mechanic David Levitt (Pol) will be speaking at the 8th Air Force Historical Society-Southern New York Chapter's May 22 luncheon. David is an enthusiastic, active Chapter member. His father was an 8th Air Force B-24 aircraft mechanic during World War II. David will give talks on "D-Day: Air, Land and Sea Ford vehicles" and also on the close relationship between the 8th Air Force and the French people and Underground. Flying one of England during World War II, the 8th AF had a crucial role in defeating Nazi Germany. The 8th AFHS honors and pays tribute to these brave, dedicated Veterans. The 8th AFHS local chapter will commemorate D-Day/V-E Day on May 22 at the Plainview Holiday Inn, along with British, French, Polish and Soviet veterans. Levitt hopes to have a full table of Local 246 enthusiasts, who are encouraged to bring their stock pre-1946 vehicles. For cost and information on the luncheon of the 8th AFHS, contact the Chapter president at 973.495.3404 or at fxe84@optonline.net. Levitt started as a Floor Mechanic at DGS. He was at PD Shop 3 for 17 years and is now at PD Shop I, primarily in the CRS front office and quality control. Pictured with Levitt (center) are 8th AF B-17 Mechanics Bernard Mirotznik (left) and Joe Minz (right).



NEW YORK CITY LOCAL 246 • SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION, AFL-CIO

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REMEMBER OUR TROOPS & PRAY FOR THEIR SAFETY

TRICKS OF THE TRADE NEW GUYS LEARN FROM OLDTIMERS

Dean Sclafani (Auto Mechanic — DOC) gives some preventive maintenance tips to rookie Auto Service Worker Sean Thompson, who recently started on the job.

Sclafani, on the job since 1997, is just one of the Local 246 members who take time from their jobs to teach some of the newer members how to service and maintain vehicles.

"It's great when the newbies can learn from the old timers," said President Joe Colangelo. "Not that we're calling you 'old' Dean. Thanks for imparting some of your knowledge to our newer guys. We rise by helping to lift others. When one does quality work, we all do quality work."

While this act of kindness might seem inconsequential, the fact that our established members have the opportunity to help newer members means that the City is hiring. Under the previous mayoral administration, there was an enormous push to privatize DOC work. Local 246 fought back on that issue and our success can be seen in the fact that there are actually new workers to train.

"By beating back privatization efforts, we have created job openings for more people," Colangelo said.

