



Flash!

Spring

Bob Lennox, Secretary - Treasurer

2007



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Support Fair Trade, Not Free Trade

by Robert M. Lennox

There's going to be a lot of talk over the next several months regarding President Bush's authority to negotiate free trade pacts without any input from Congress.

It's important that all of us pay attention to this. For several years, President Bush has had the power to parley agreements that have been detrimental to American workers. Coincidentally, we've also had the fifth consecutive year of a trade deficit, which soared to \$764 billion last year.

Just with China alone we had a trade deficit of \$232.5 billion in 2006. (The deficit is the difference between the amount of goods we buy from a country and the amount they buy from the U.S.)

Congressional Democrats are taking a stand saying the trade deficit is blamed for "failed businesses, displaced workers, lower real wages and rising inequality." Since 2000, they say the trade deficit has destroyed fully one-third of the 3 million manufacturing jobs in the U.S.

The United States also had a trade deficit of \$64.1 billion with Mexico last year. A shocking new independent film starring Antonio Banderas and Jennifer Lopez, titled *Bordertown*, is raising some very real political questions about NAFTA, CAFTA and corporations.

Since 1993, the bodies of over 400 women (many of whom were mutilated and raped) have been found around Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, just south of El Paso, Texas. Described as a sprawling metropolis, Ciudad Juarez is home to many international factories where poor women from both sides of the border work.

These unsolved killings have turned into an international scandal and huge embarrassment for both U.S. and Mexican officials.

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Amnesty International has been the leading voice in bringing attention to these horrific crimes and has endorsed the film (which currently does not have a U.S. release date). The group says sloppy and inadequate police work, delays, falsification of evidence and even threats of torture to those who do try to investigate, are commonplace.

While there is speculation that serial killers, gang initiations or even organ trafficking schemes are occurring, there is no doubt that both governments are responsible for the violent exploitation of these female factory workers.

This is a result of misplaced U.S. government priorities which put corporate exploitation and profits ahead of workers, their families and their communities. The Bush Administration has helped usher in a sense of lawlessness on our borders, and in our corporate boardrooms. This powerful combination of government/corporate interests has also helped to silence the media, which has allowed these border killings to continue for over 10 years without any justice for the victims or their families.

President Bush's authority to negotiate trade agreements without congressional oversight will expire on June 30. We can no longer tolerate this abuse of President Bush's authority. I am urging every member to visit the Local 495 web site (www.teamsters495.org) and click on the button Write Your Congressman. (If you type in your zip code, the system will automatically send the email directly to your Congressional representative.) Simply tell your elected official that you want them to support fair trade, not free trade.

Finally, in this issue we profile another dynamic Shop Steward who is making a difference: Nicki Taylor from the Hertz LAX facility. Nicki's commitment to the betterment of her co-workers is to be commended.

We've also highlighted the dedicated team at the Ontario Disney Warehouse. As you'll read, this group plays an integral role making sure that park guests enjoy the full Disney experience.

Additionally, we're announcing the date for our Annual Picnic, and we've included an article on the many scholarship opportunities available through your Teamster membership. Parents of graduating high school seniors are urged to investigate these programs soon, as the application deadlines are nearing.

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Feature: Hertz' Nicki Taylor

Nicki Taylor, a Hertz Rental Car customer service agent, a single mother of three, and—since 2001—a U.S. citizen, takes pride in everything she does. She'll even tell you how old she is. "I'm 45 and proud of it," Taylor says. "I'm proud of how I've lived my life and to be doing the work that I do."

"It's hard to imagine," Taylor says of the volume of rentals she sees at LAX's Hertz facility. "We rent about 2,500 cars a day. On Mondays, it's 3,000 cars." Not only is LAX the home to the most car rentals in the world, Taylor explains, the Los Angeles airport location is the busiest Hertz location on the planet.

A Teamster for 16 years, Taylor is the quality of person whose work doesn't stop at the Gold Counter. Five years ago she was on a contract negotiating team, "It was fascinating and very rewarding," she remembers, "We added jury duty to the contract and got a great pay raise." Taylor has been one of Local 495's dedicated Shop Stew-

ards for three years now, defending the members' rights.

As a Shop Steward, Taylor primarily works with customer service, however Taylor has put her mediation skills to use for bus drivers, vehicle service agents (VSAs) and a shuttle driver.

"The most satisfying aspect of this role is helping people. As a mediator between employees and management, she often addresses personality conflicts, misunderstandings and the results of audits."

The most satisfying aspect of this role is helping people. As a mediator between employees and management, she often addresses personality conflicts, misunderstandings and the

results of audits. Mediating, she says, is more satisfying than filing a grievance. Of course, winning a grievance on behalf of a fellow Teamster, she adds, "is incredibly satisfying."

Taylor reports that Hertz's incredibly diverse work population is both a challenging and a rewarding part of her job. "I do a lot of listening, explaining and figuring out how to help." Employee ages range from 18 to 70, and work experience ranges from a person's first job to 40 years with the Teamsters. Even more interesting, adds the former Brit, "There are people here from all over the world, me included."

"They all have different experiences, perspectives and opinions, often about the union," says Taylor. "A lot of my job—especially with younger workers—is education. They come to me with open minds. They want to learn!" And Taylor loves to teach them about what their union can do.

Taylor herself became an America citizen in 2001. "It was brilliant! My kids were there. I swore the oath with 3,000 other people, they played 'I'm Proud To Be an American,' and I don't think there was a dry eye in the place. I can't hear that song even now without crying."

Taylor recently booked a flight to the UK to visit her family—but she won't be renting a car. With her father's assistance, Taylor plans to show up on the family doorstep for the first time in 12 years. "I'm going to surprise my mother!"

Loyal in her role as Shop Steward, Taylor is looking forward to contract proposals and possible negotiations in the spring. "You can be sure I'll be there," she emphasizes.



Applications Due For Three Teamster Scholarships

The 7th Annual Local 495 Scholarship Awards Program is well underway and parents of graduating high school seniors are urged to apply soon, as the deadline is near.

The Local's fund awards up to 10 scholarships annually to outstanding high school seniors. Each recipient receives a one-time \$1,500 award.

To be eligible, the graduating high school senior must be the son, daughter or grandchild of an active, retired, disabled, deceased or laid-off Teamster member who has or had at least 12 months of consecutive membership in good standing within the Teamster organization.

Additionally, the child must be in his or her last year of high school, and has not already graduated. The child must also plan on attending an accredited college or university.

The Local 495 Executive Board reviews all applications and considers Grade Point Average (GPA), SAT/ACT scores, activities, work experience, honors, distinctions and achievements. Applicants must also complete a hundred-word essay. Members can get more information and download the application form by visiting the Local's web site, www.teamsters495.org. Members can also request an application by calling the Local at 562-908-8727 during

normal operating hours.

A portion of the application is completed by the Teamster parent, the applicant's guidance counselor or equivalent high school official, and the graduating high school senior. In addition, individual photos are requested with the completed application.

The completed application along with all of the required documentation must be received by the Local by April 30.

"Providing financial assistance to families to help offset the rising cost of higher education is just another example of how the Teamsters take care of their own," Local 495 Secretary-Treasurer Bob Lennox commented.

"I highly encourage our members with a graduating high school senior to explore this opportunity along with the other scholarship programs offered through their Teamster membership."

In addition to the Local 495 higher education fund, scholarships are also available through the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (www.teamsters.org), Joint Council 42 (www.teamstersjc42.com), and the California Teamsters Hispanic Caucus (www.cathc.com).

Parents are advised to investigate the application process as soon as possible, because the deadline dates for each award vary.



Over 200 C

You could feel the excitement in the air on December 14th when Local 495 hosted its final – and most popular – General Membership Meeting of the year.

For years, the December meeting has served as the perfect venue for the Local to show its appreciation to the membership. And the 2006 event was no different. Over 200 members – many bringing their families along – attended the festive meeting.

Before the meeting started, the large group enjoyed a delicious catered Mexican dinner with all of the traditional trimmings. President Rigo Tirado welcomed the assembly that also included Local 495 Executive Board members, Trustees and staff.

"This is a special event that we do exclusively for the members to let them know how much we appreciate them and their support," Rigo said after the meeting. "It also gives a chance to wish them a happy holiday season."

After the union business concluded, the Local's long-established



Celebrate at Holiday Raffle

Holiday Raffle began. Members sat on the edge of their seats as a bounty of terrific prizes was raffled off. This year, the wide variety of prizes included a large assortment of gift certificates, specialty items and electronic goods, including iPods.

“Every single member who attended the meeting left for home with a gift,” Local 495 Office Manager Gloria Rosas proudly noted.

The finale came when four grand prizes were awarded. Carlos Flores, from the Anaheim Disneyland Warehouse, won a PlayStation 3; Hoa Van Chu, from RSI Home Products went home with a pass to Disneyland for a family of four; Ed Stensrud, a City of Industry Penske employee was thrilled to win the Bose Surround System; and Albert Bautista, a member from BMW in Ontario, left with a 27-inch flat screen plasma television.

“Every single member that attended the meeting left for home

with a gift,” Local 495 Office Manager Gloria Rosas proudly noted.

“We are extremely pleased and honored to host two events throughout the year where we can show the members how grateful we are for their support,” Tirado added. “The December meeting and our annual picnic are wonderful gatherings that celebrate our union and underscore our long tradition of brotherhood.”



Local 495 Presents Annual Picnic

Local 495 is pleased to announce that the union's annual picnic will be held on Sunday, June 3rd. The carnival-themed party will again be held at Whittier Narrows Park in South El Monte.

This exciting, union-sponsored event includes a delicious tri-tip and chicken barbeque with all the standard side dishes and trimmings, musical entertainment, and a wide assortment of age-appropriate games, competitions and events. The Local will also be raffling off numerous gifts and prizes.

“The picnic is a fantastic way for our members to enjoy a fun-filled social gathering,” Local 495 Secretary-Treasurer Bob Lennox noted. “It's really a terrific event dedicated to saluting our members and their families.”

The beautiful Whittier Narrows Park is a 1,400 acre facility that has fishing lakes, picnic areas, playgrounds, a nature center, equestrian facility, trails, a multipurpose athletic complex, a military museum, soccer fields, volleyball courts, and archery, skeet, pistol and trap-shooting ranges.

As in the past, members, their spouse (or guest) and children are invited to attend free of charge. (Cost for additional guests will be \$10 per person). This year, members are advised that wristbands will be required for admittance.

Tickets will go on sale through a membership-wide mailing in March. Once your attendance is confirmed, the Local will then send out wristbands to each family prior to the event.

Mark your calendar for Sunday, June 3rd and plan on spending a very enjoyable afternoon with your Local union brothers and sisters!

Feature: Disney Distribution Center

They are miles from the most recognizable theme parks in the world, behind the scenes working in an obscure, massive building in Ontario. But each day, these Local 495 Disney cast members perform a vital function.

Twenty full-time and 20 seasonal employees run the Ontario Disney Warehouse. Most importantly, they know their work is appreciated and that they are an integral part of the Disney team.

“This is a very hard working unit that performs an integral function for Disney,” Local 495 Business Agent Roman Delgado commented.”

Working from a fairly new, 285,000 square-foot facility off the 60 freeway that has no signage, the group receives, unloads, stores, packs, then distributes virtually everything sold

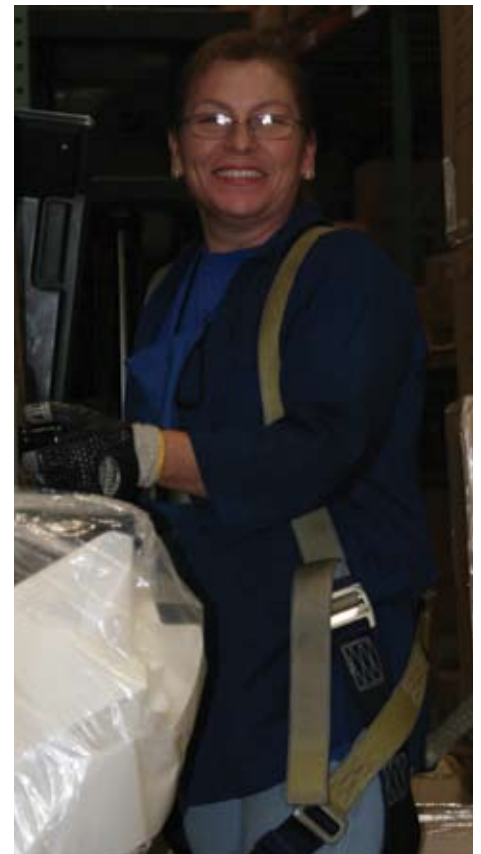
at Disneyland, Disney’s California Adventure, and at the Disney stores at Downtown Disney and at the Disney hotels.

In addition, they warehouse all the custodial needs (toilet paper, etc.) for both parks, and the structural molds to virtually everything at the parks. As an example, if a light post on Main Street gets damaged and needs to be replaced, the maintenance crew handling the detail will call the Ontario warehouse and order the mold for the post.

“We opened in 2000 and are an extension of the Anaheim warehouse. We handle most of the heavy volume ... clothing is very big for us,” 37-year Disney employee and Teamster Chief Shop Steward Chris Weide explained.

“We also store a lot of plush animals and stuffed toys, but it really depends on the time of year. At Christmas, we have a lot of toys and during the winter a lot of clothes. However, the one thing that is constant for us is mouse ears. There is always a huge demand for the ears, and we always have plenty of them.”

The Ontario Warehouse is so large that they can even hold ‘overflow’ items that the parks don’t have room to store on site, like some of their holiday decorations. Weide, the warehouse general foreman, pointed



out that the one thing the warehouse doesn't store is food items.

Weide and assistant Shop Steward Nancy Herrera help represent the committed group – many of them career Disney employees, including Weide's wife, Lisa, who is the shipping and receiving foreman.

"This is a very hard working unit that performs an integral function for Disney," Local 495 Business Agent Roman Delgado commented. "They're dedicated employees, and good union members who are interested in what's going on within the Teamsters."

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The team's dedication to keeping the supply chain running smoothly can be underscored by one fact: "We



operate one shift, seven days a week, 365 days a year. In all the time I've worked at the Disney warehouses, only one year we got Christmas day off," Weide noted.

"We handle most of the heavy volume." 37-year Disney employee and Teamster Chief Shop Steward Chris Weide explained.

But these cast members know that they are an important part of the Anaheim Disney entertainment experience and they are contributing to the company's success. "Not too long ago, they sent Mickey out to visit with us to remind us that we are an important part of the team," Weide added.

Disney management also includes the group in its community service endeavors. Each Christmas, the warehouse team is assigned a needy family that they 'adopt.'

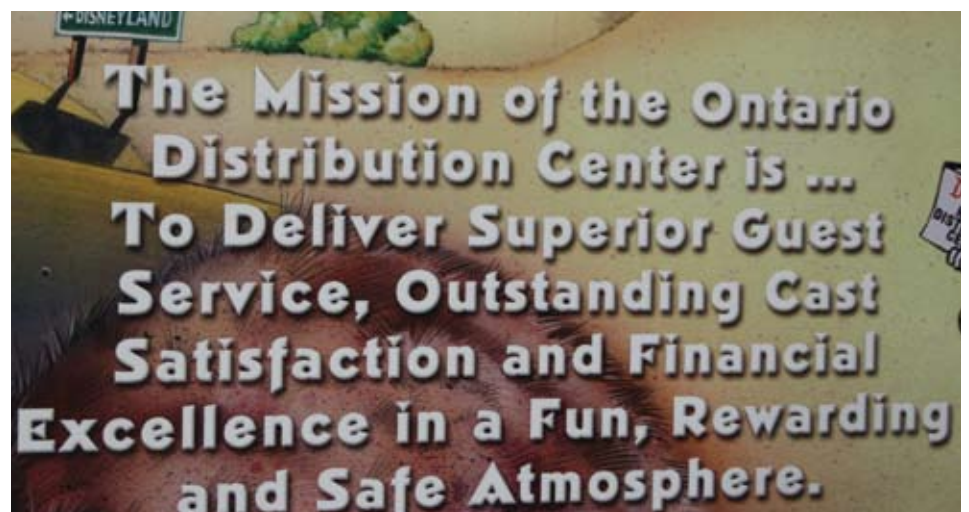
Weide also says that the management team works very well with the Teamster group. "If anything is going on with a cast member, they call us in as well. They're really good about that."

They're miles from the music and the lights, but the Ontario warehouse team understands that they are



just one group out of the thousands of people behind the scenes who ensure that the parks and neighboring entities operate at the highest level.

"If people knew more about the parks, and what it takes to operate them, they would understand why it costs so much for admission," Weide added.





Holiday Raffle



Teamsters Local 495
9101 E. Whittier Blvd., 2nd Floor
Pico Rivera, CA 90660-2443
Visit your union web site
www.teamsters495.org

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