

Automotive, Industrial and Allied Workers

Flash!

TEAMSTERS

Robert M. Lennox, Secretary - Treasurer

Fall 2008

www.teamsters495.org



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Mary Gavin Hertz Chief Steward

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LA Fairplex at Pomona**

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Your Vote, Your Voice

*by Robert M. Lennox
Secretary-Treasurer, Local 495*

This November, hardworking Americans will finally have a voice. We have the opportunity to put an end to eight years of failed policies that have crippled the middle class and destroyed the American dream.

Teamster families around the country deserve change and only one candidate can deliver it – Barack Obama.

While there are many serious issues facing our country, there are stark differences between the two presidential candidates:

Senator McCain endorses President Bush's healthcare "ownership" plan and believes you should be on your own to purchase it in the marketplace. He also supports taxing the healthcare benefits workers receive from their employer. This is outrageous.

Senator Obama represents true change and wants to solve the health care crisis – not by taxing those who already have medical coverage, but by making it more affordable for everyone.

Senator McCain wants to privatize Social Security. In other words, the same leaders who de-regulated the mortgage industry sending millions of homeowners into foreclosure would then get a chance to destroy the cornerstone so many retirees count on.

Senator Obama is clearly against this idea. He has a specific plan for long-term solvency

of Social Security. His economic map would also strengthen retirement savings and reform corporate bankruptcy laws so they protect workers and retirees.

Speaking of the economy, John McCain's plan has been called 'vague', at best. It's a sketch that calls for four more years of the same unfair practices that reward corporations and leave workers out in the cold.

Obama wants to jump start our sagging economy with a \$50 billion plan that will prevent 1 million Americans from losing their jobs while providing 150 million workers with a tax cut.

Senator Obama understands the struggles of working families. He sponsored the Patriot Employer Act, supports the Employee Free Choice Act and will renegotiate NAFTA.

John McCain said NAFTA was a good idea and has voted for every disastrous free-trade agreement since NAFTA. He voted against the Employee Free Choice Act, voted for strike replacement workers and for tax cuts for corporations that move jobs offshore.

The Republicans are running as fast as they can away from Bush's sorely negative approval ratings and countless failed policies that have stripped our freedoms, destroyed our economy and crushed the middle class.

While McCain and Palin are masquerading as candidates of change – a little hard to do



when you've agreed with the president over 90 percent of the time – there is only one candidate in this important race that will bring about true change, Barack Obama.

It is profoundly critical that each of you get the facts, register to vote, then make your voices heard on November 4th. To become a registered voter, simply go to our web site at www.teamsters495.org or call 1-800-345-VOTE. Please note that the last day to register to vote in the general election is October 20th.

"We have the opportunity to put an end to eight years of failed policies that have crippled the middle class and destroyed the American dream."

— Bob Lennox

OBAMA

CHANGE TEAMSTERS CAN BELIEVE IN

This election year more than ever, we need to make a difference as Teamsters if we want to see a change in the way working families are treated. We need a President who will put our interests first. Barack Obama is that person.

Barack Obama understands the challenges working families face every day. Here are some of the reasons why we as Teamsters should vote for Barack Obama:

- Obama introduced the Patriot Employer Act of 2007 to reward companies that create good jobs with good benefits for American workers.
- As President, Obama will work with the leaders of Canada and Mexico to fix NAFTA so it works for all Americans.
- As President, Obama will create trade policies that open up foreign markets to support good American jobs, not destroy them.
- Obama will work to ban the permanent replacement of striking workers.
- Obama is a co-sponsor and strong supporter of the Employee Free Choice Act. As president, he will sign it.

**TEAMSTERS
FOR
OBAMA
IN 2008**

Using the Change to Win Toolkit

Creating an Account:

Go to www.ctwtoolkit.org

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <http://www.ctwtoolkit.org/>. The page features a large orange banner with the text "CHANGE to WIN" and "UNITING WORKERS FOR A BETTER AMERICA". Below the banner, there is a "Login" section with fields for "Email:" and "Password:" and a checkbox for "Remember my email and password". A "New user registration" link is highlighted with a red box and an arrow pointing to it from a text box that says "Click 'New user registration'". Other links include "Forgot your password?" and "Need Help?". The footer contains copyright information for 2006 and links for "CONTACT US", "PRIVACY POLICY", and "TERMS OF SERVICE".

*Teamsters Want Change!
Obama Can Deliver!*



www.TeamstersForObama.com

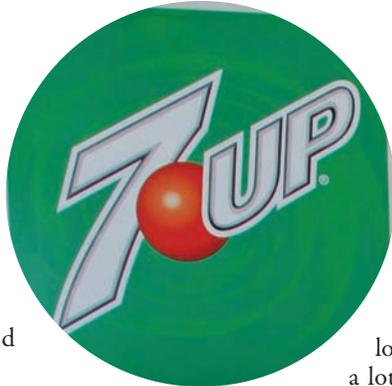
Access using this members-only password: **Obama08**

For campaign updates, text **"UNION"** to **34343**



Teamsters President James P. Hoffa with Barack Obama

Local 495 Effervesces with 7-UP



In January of 2007, roughly 100 production maintenance mechanics working at five 7-Up locations became proud Teamsters.

“We fought for a long time to get the Teamsters in,” Shop Steward James Reeves quickly pointed out. “We tried in 1981 but were outnumbered, and now, over 20 years later, we are finally members. This is one of the reasons why I’m a steward; I wanted to be affiliated with a strong organization so that anything I could do to help the members, I knew I would have the support from a well-organized, well-known union.”



James Reeves (mechanic - 30 years 7-up)

The mechanics, working out of production, warehouse and distribution facilities in Vernon, Buena Park, Orange, Redlands and the San Fernando Valley, were represented by an independent union.

“It was a very smooth transition,” Reeves noted. “The company seems to respect the Teamster much more than the other union.”

Local 495 Business Agents Roman Delgado, Jim Lennox and Gene Rivera work with the sprawling group. “We absorbed the contract the other union had, which is currently

a two-year agreement,” Delgado explained.

A new contract, Reeves details, is exactly what the mechanics are looking forward to. “There is a lot of gray area that gives the company carte blanche, and a lot of

language that is open to interpretation. We hope to alleviate that in the future. I’m looking forward to getting down to business and hammering out some needed improvements.”

Many in the talented group have over 20 years with the company. “They are very loyal to their company, and the company treats them with a lot of respect,” Delgado emphasized. “They give the mechanics their space to work and their freedom to get the job done. The company is very well aware of the pool of talented mechanics they have, and they are a group the company has full trust in.”

Most of the facilities in the bargaining unit are a 24-hour operation. If a product isn’t being produced, maintenance and sanitation



Sergio Marin (vending mechanic)

is performed. It’s also typical for the mechanics to work 70+ hour work weeks.

James Reeves, who will celebrate 30 years with the company in July, says he’s gone through numerous owners and name changes throughout the years. “We were Cadbury Schweppes and I

think we’re now considered Dr. Pepper/Snapple,” he says, adding that the company also produces products under the Welch’s and A&W names, and Buena Park produces Monster Energy drinks and Dejavu Water under contract.

Whatever company name management decides to use, one thing won’t change: the mechanics are now proud Teamsters.

“I want to say thank you to Roman and all the business agents for their support and guidance, and to Bob Lennox of course, for allowing us to be part of his organization.

We are proud to be Teamster members, and we’re looking forward to working together to improve working conditions and benefits, and helping the company prosper,” Reeves added.



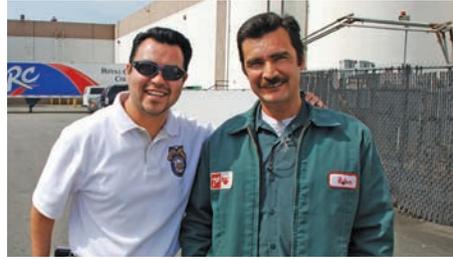
Gerrit VanDenbrink (vending mechanic)



Sal Marquez (truck mechanic)



Pancho Miranda (mechanic)



Roman Delgado (business agent) and Ruben



Cruz Galindo (truck mechanic)



Igor Kuksov (mechanic)



Fernando Arauz (truck mechanic)



Alex Solis (vending)



Roman Delgado (business agent)



Arnold Romero (truck mechanic)



Alvaro Marquez (vending mechanic)



7-UP truck mechanics (l. to r.) Jacob Collins, Sal Marquez, Fernando Arauz, John McIntyre, Ivery Williams, Charles Lee, Ron Gardiner, Arnold Romero and Cruz Galindo

Chief Shop Steward Mary Gavin

One could easily describe Shop Steward Mary Gavin as energetic, compassionate and diligent. A member for 29 years, Mary has proudly served as a steward for 19 years and as Chief Shop Steward for the past three years.



Chief Shop Steward Mary Gavin

It's a position, she quickly notes, that brings her much joy.

"I love what I do as a steward. One of the greatest enjoyments in my life is being a part of representing my co-workers."

"The members at Hertz LAX couldn't have a better shop steward than Mary Gavin," Local 495 Business Agent Jim Lennox points out. "She truly is my right hand there. She fights tirelessly for the members and she is very successful in what she does."

Mary, a day shift driver, serves as a union liaison with seven other stewards at the busy facility that has roughly 400 members. She also finds time to be very active in union business, including attending the recent Teamsters Women's Conference.

"Every time I attend a conference I get more and more enlightened. We learn so much from all the seminars and speakers at the event," she noted.

While education and training are the focus of the gathering, the conference also

has a great spirit of camaraderie over the issues that unite women. "Wages, health care and the economy are troubling women from all over the country," she said. "It seems to be the underlying theme no matter where you live."



Mary Gavin with Humberto Luna (driver)

Next September, Mary will serve once again on the committee to negotiate a new agreement with Hertz. "We're looking forward to a better benefits package with no take backs, a wage increase and an improved dental plan," she noted, adding that her co-workers are united.

"They are very concerned, very active members. We also have strong shop stewards who will all be very involved."

A Los Angeles resident, Mary and her husband, Donald, have four children and four grandchildren. She proudly notes that three out of four of her kids are union members. Self-described homebodies, Mary and Donald spend their leisure time relaxing with their family. "My hobbies are my grandchildren," she adds with a chuckle. "We spend a lot of time with them."

Although she'll turn 65 next March, Mary says she's not thinking of retiring just yet. "I'm sure I will be with the company through the next contract and until there is a cohesive working relationship between my co-workers and management. I want to make sure everyone is taken care of before I think about retiring."

This kind of selflessness is exactly why Mary enjoys a good relationship with management, and why she is adored within the union.

"We just love her at the local," Jim Lennox added. "For me, she's one of the best shop stewards I ever met in my 30 years of being a union member."



Tiana Miles, Mary G., Beverly Rubalcaba



Emilio Hernandez, Anuar Romo, Mary G., Tina Montalvo



Mary Gavin, John Beltran



Jim Lennox (Business Agent), Galvan Narciso, Sergio Acuna, Mary Gavin, Rudolph Dawson, Ronald Campbell, George Perez, Jerry B.

*Hertz mechanics,
members of Local 495*

Local 495 at Hertz



Don Phipps, Becky Sauter, Mary G., Jim Lennox, Suzanne Beltran



Antonio Flores (driver)

“She’s one of the best shop stewards I ever met in my 30 years of being a union member.”

— JIM LENNOX,
Local 495 Business Agent

Those accolades go both ways. “We have the very best in our leadership,” Mary stressed. “Bob Lennox is the greatest guy; Jim is spot on; Rigo, the ladies in the office – they are all fantastic. I really believe our leadership is above and beyond the other locals.”



*Dennis Crumwell, Paul Miller
(Instant Return reps)*



Tom Green



Craig Delay, Mary Gavin, Bill Beal

And while some may think volunteering countless hours to help serve your fellow workers is a thankless job, just ask Mary for her thoughts. “It’s very rewarding and I know my co-workers appreciate me.”

Mary easily and gladly shares her knowledge, insight and time for many reasons, one of which is to show her deep gratitude for the Teamsters.

“My union is a warm blanket on a frosty, cold winter day. I never want to work at any job without union representation.”



Mary Gavin and Art Cates



*Chris Harris, Farideh Sedigh, Mary G.,
Alex Martinez, Rodolfo Morales (VSA Crew)*



Edel Laranang (mechanic), Von Khachatoorian (bus driver), John Strohecker (mechanic)



Chris Imamura



Guy Coats

Why Teamster Members Should Vote For Barack Obama

We as Teamster members need to remember only one thing when we vote in November: who will speak up for working families.

For eight years, the Bush administration has turned a cold shoulder to working families, enacting trade initiatives that reward big companies with huge profits while taking jobs away from hardworking Americans. In addition, now there are tough laws in place that make it hard for workers to form unions.

And look at the shape of the economy. We cannot afford a repeat of the last eight years. We can turn this around, but it will take profound change. We can vote for Senator Barack Obama.



Obama understands our fight. He comes from a working class family. Before entering Congress, he worked as an organizer to help improve living conditions for laid-off workers.

He introduced the Patriot Employer Act of 2007 to reward companies that create good jobs with good benefits for American workers. He has led efforts to stop employers from unfairly classifying their employees as independent contractors rather than full-time employees.

Obama has pledged to end unfair trade policies and will work with the leaders of Canada and Mexico to fix NAFTA so it works for American workers.

As a member of the U.S. Senate, Obama has pledged his support for the Employee Free Choice Act.

Obama understands working families and their struggles. He understands us.

Obama is the change we need. But he can't do it alone. He needs our help now as he works toward Election Day. And then in November, we must support him as Teamsters. United we stand, divided we fall.

We cannot afford to let this opportunity for change pass us by. Obama brings the change that Teamsters can believe in.

OBAMA

CHANGE TEAMSTERS CAN BELIEVE IN



As president, Obama plans to:

- Renegotiate NAFTA so it works for all Americans.
- Create trade policies to support good American jobs, not destroy them.
- Ban the permanent replacement of striking workers.
- Sign the Employee Free Choice Act into law.



www.TeamstersForObama.com

Access using this members-only password: **Obama08** • For campaign updates, text **"UNION"** to **34343**

Local 495's Assistant Starters

Teamsters Local 495 represents Assistant Starters at Santa Anita, Hollywood Park, Los Alamitos, Del Mar, the Fairplex, Bay Meadows and Golden Gate tracks.

In the world of horse racing, they have one of the most dangerous jobs: They perch themselves precariously on metal bars between horse and jockey, and their responsibilities mount as the seconds tick before the starting bell goes off.

Highly skilled and very well trained, horse racing's Assistant Starters climb the gate with an added protection: they're represented by the Teamsters.

Local 495 proudly represents approximately 90 members working at race tracks in Southern and Northern California. In 2003, they heard track chatter about how well the Teamsters represent members in the racing industry, and the group soon disaffiliated with SEIU.

Recently, the group – many long-term racing professionals – signed a new five-year contract agreement.

"There were major changes to the contract with improvements in their health and welfare, as well as their pension, and we were able to continue the same levels of benefits for the retirees," Local 495 President Rigo Tirado explained. "It's one of the best contracts we've ever gotten."

The Local represents Assistant Starters

at Santa Anita, Hollywood Park, Los Alamitos, Del Mar, the Fairplex, Bay Meadows and Golden Gate tracks. Additionally, Assistant Starters can be found working at the numerous statewide county fairs that host horse racing.

"We got a lot of help from the negotiating committee. I give them a lot of the credit. They stood up to the plate, and the members were behind us one hundred percent," Tirado added.

When the ballots were tallied, the new agreement was overwhelmingly approved with a 98 percent ratification rate throughout, and 100 percent from the members at Los Alamitos.

The negotiating committee consisted of representatives from every track, including Northern California Shop Steward Vince Sanchez.

"This was my second time working on an agreement and I believe the negotiations went pretty well. Bob Lennox and Rigo Tirado did a great job and the members are happy with it. We had a little bit of a battle but we wanted to go five years, and we're very glad for that," Sanchez pointed out.



"The economy is struggling and the horse racing industry is struggling, but we got a competitive wage increase," Sanchez added.

Many of the Assistant Starters – a position typically held by men – work year-round. Sanchez said that the key to being successful – and safe – is for the Assistant Starter to be patient and aware of the task at hand.

"The more relaxed you are, the more relaxed the horse is," he explained. Roughly 12 starters work the gate with two back-up starters. "It's pretty dangerous. Some of members have been around for a while, but we do have a few young fellows doing it as well."

Immediately after the race gets underway, the Assistant Starters make sure the gate is off the track, and then they start preparing for the next race. Typically, there is a race every 25 to 45 minutes, depending on the track.

Before races, the Assistant Starters can also be found working, or 'schooling,' with the jockeys and horses, training them how to get in and out of the gates safely.

"These members deserved a good contract," Tirado added. "They work very hard and it's a very hazardous job."



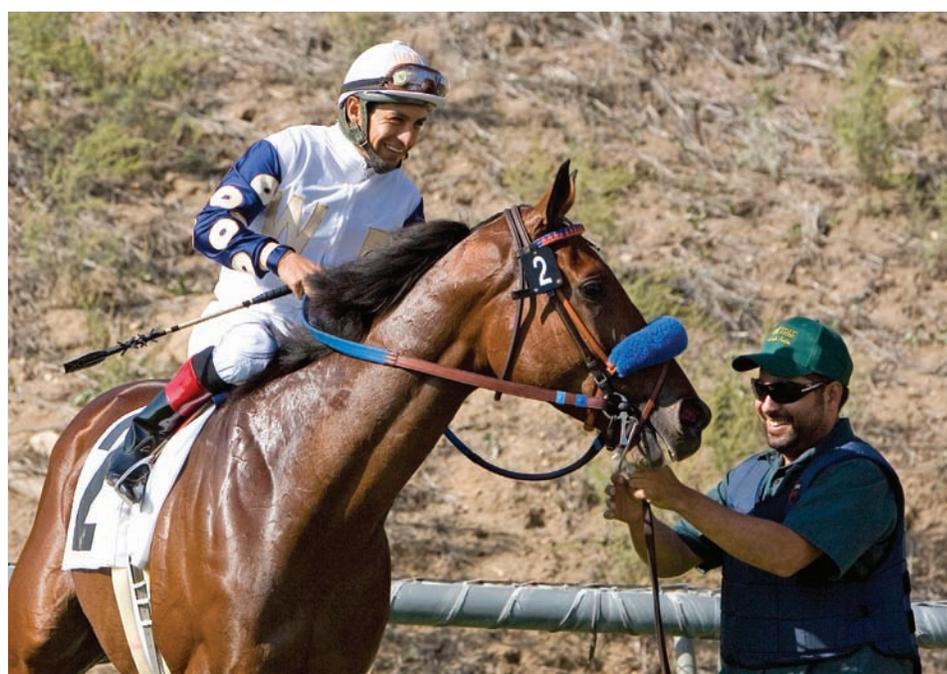
Teamsters Assistant Starters at Santa Anita Racetrack

New 5-Year Contract Agreement



*“These members
deserved a good contract.
They work very hard and
it’s a very hazardous job.”*

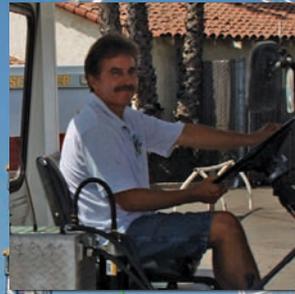
— RIGO TIRADO,
President, Local 495



The Fairplex at Pomona



Tyrone Hall, Security Guard



Local 495 Member



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