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Local 495

Automotive, Industrial and Allied Workers

TEAMSTERS

Flash!

Robert M. Lennox, Secretary - Treasurer

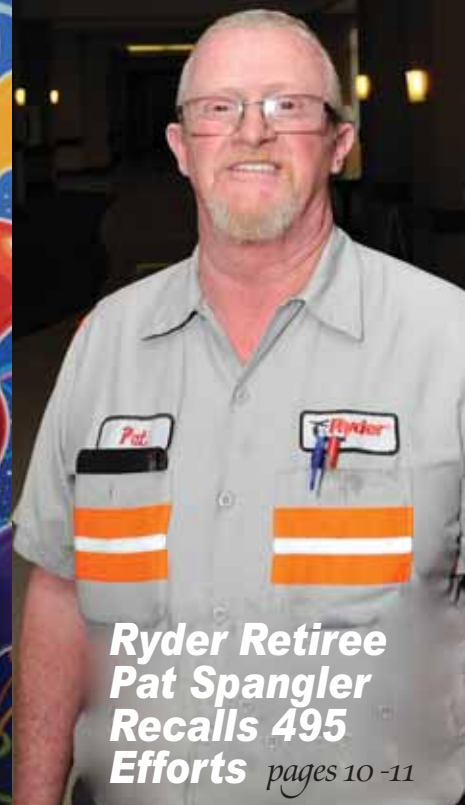
Spring 2012



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Ryder Retiree Pat Spangler Recalls His Local 495 Efforts

Building a giant cage for his seven exotic birds keeps Pat Spangler pretty busy these days. But when the tool-belt comes off, Pat is still working for the members he left behind at Ryder.

Just because he's retired doesn't mean Pat's going to stop helping the Teamsters. "I've made it known that I'm still helping the union, and I'm gonna keep an eye out for any shenanigans." He laughed and added, "I'll be a useful commodity for the union as long as I am able!"

Spangler retired late last year after 33 years as a mechanic for Ryder. He spent 17 of those 33 years as Shop Steward for Local 495, and so to Pat, standing up for his fellow Teamsters is as natural as breathing. He's a strong believer in the Teamsters and says their collective strength protects each individual employee from those who might otherwise take advantage to save a buck. Pat wrote on his Teamsters blog that they must "Remain strong, stand together, fight for what is in your contract."

The Teamsters honored Pat at a recent General Membership



Pat Spangler retired late last year after 33 years as a mechanic for Ryder. He spent 17 of those 33 years as Shop Steward for Local 495.

meeting. "Bob invited me to their monthly union meeting and they presented me with a plaque and a retirement jacket," Pat said. "It was really something special!"

Spangler started with Ryder in the City of Industry, repairing brakes, engines, fuel lines and was a vital part of keeping Ryder's leasing division operating safely and smoothly. He also worked at the "old Pomona" facility as well as at Riverside, Fontana and Rancho Cucamonga. He became a Shop Steward because, as he puts it, "I was tired of people not being treated properly — trying to do it on their own but not getting too far." So he agreed to become Shop

Steward and has been pleased with his choice — and he's not the only one.

"Pat's one of the good guys," said Secretary-Treasurer Bob Lennox. "He listens, cares and takes action. And he knows his stuff." His fellow Teamsters knew he'd be there when things got tough. "He's like a big brother, the guys always knew he'd stick up for them."

Business Agent George Park agrees. "Pat is a standup guy and doesn't stray from his principles. He was an outstanding shop steward."

Spangler brushes off such praise, saying, "I was around



Pat Spangler is honored at his retirement after 33 years as a mechanic for Ryder.

whenever anyone needed help. It's the right thing to do." It's no surprise, then, that he still has people calling him — even if another has now taken over as Steward. He knows so many details about the Teamsters and contracts that he even gets calls from other Shop Stewards. "I give them guidance however I can," he said, simply.

Thinking on your feet and learning year after year were valuable traits at Ryder, and no one knows this better than Pat. It's one of the reasons he's passionate about preserving the rights of his fellow Teamsters. "These are the best bunch of guys to work with, and sharp too," he said. "They're the best to help and defend, the best I could ask for."

Spangler recalled a few cases that stick out as big triumphs. He's protected the health of fellow Teamsters by refusing to accept a company's assertions that employees weren't being exposed to unsafe chemicals. "They fed us some lies about the product, but we stuck it out, fought the case for nine months in arbitration. And finally, we won. Our guy got his

back pay, too."

Another victory for a member involved an agreement to pay double-time to anyone who had worked seven days in a row without a two-day break. "They tried to give this guy \$2,000 out of the \$14,000 they owed him. He called me and said, 'They don't want to pay the whole thing.' So I told him no way, don't take it, and they ended up paying him what he was owed right there on the spot."

Bob Lennox chuckles when

he hears that story. "He was an absolute bulldog for his guys," said Lennox. "That's just how he is, he's old school. He doesn't let anyone push his guys around." He's even helped out certain folks in management when they had troubles. "They were good to my people so I helped them however I could," Spangler said. "We gotta stick together."

Lennox said the sense of unity Pat has brought to the local will be missed. "Like I said, he's just a good guy. He makes you want to do your best and be educated about your rights. We need more Pats in this world."

In between calls from the union, Pat will be refining his bird aviary, where his rare rainbow-hued birds will be able to hang out together. But when calls come in, Pat stands ready to help. He'll tell his fellow Teamsters, "Strength comes from within each and every one of you. Stand up and be counted. Each of you has the ability to be a leader."



Pat Spangler (right) with his fellow Teamsters, Dale Kirkpatrick (left) and Pete Aguayo (center).



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Teamsters 495



Bringing attention to the high corporate pay and low corporate taxes at Fed Ex are, from left to right, Business Agents George Park, Kevin Barrus, John Espinoza, Secretary Treasurer Robert Lennox, President Rigo Tirado, and Business Agent James Lennox. Members are urged to ship with UPS, where its employees enjoy the pay, benefits and job protection they receive working under a Teamster contract.

Important Informational Meeting

**Mobilize Opposition
to the Falsely Named
'Campaign Finance Reform'**

Saturday,

April 14, 2012

9 am to 11 am

**Florentine Gardens
12051 Garvey Avenue,
El Monte, CA 91732**

A Message to the Members

from Robert M. Lennox
Secretary-Treasurer, Local 495



BEWARE:

“Campaign Finance Reform” Takes Away Unions’ Political Power

A falsely named initiative will be on the California ballot this November and it is vital that every union family oppose it.

It is called “Campaign Finance Reform” but union leaders have correctly called it the “Paycheck Deception” or “Corporate Deception” initiative.

What it does is take away the unions’ political power by prohibiting unions from contributing to political campaigns and from using voluntary payroll deductions for any political purposes.

This is a direct hit at organized labor’s ability to advocate for its members. This measure would restrict political fundraising by unions, whose members normally pay their dues through payroll deduction – and a portion of that helps our lobbying and political efforts.

The deceptive ballot initiative we oppose has gathered over 900,000 signatures to qualify for the November 2012 California ballot. However, the measure is not about campaign finance reform, as its backers claim. The right-wing millionaire supporters of this ballot initiative have created a giant loophole that would allow for unlimited corporate spending on political campaigns – but restrict unions.

This initiative would result in big corporations and their lobbyists having even greater influence over our political system. Corporations already outspend unions 19-1 in politics. This initiative would destroy any opposition to the agenda of big corporations – and that includes outsourcing jobs, slashing wages and health benefits and attacking retirement security.

The key backers of these attacks on workers are the same groups that always try to block increases in the minimum wage, undercut job safety laws and reduce funding for education and social programs. They know working families and their unions are fighting against corporate greed, and they want to silence our voice on the job, in legislation and in politics.

I am urging all Teamster members to recognize how dangerous this ballot measure would be and work together with their families, friends and co-workers to defeat this truly destructive initiative.

Toyota Contract Ratified

After a unanimous recommendation by the negotiating committee and a fiery speech by Shop Steward Jay Hall, members at Toyota voted to ratify a five-year contract.

Hall put the matter into perspective in his emotional talk, telling the audience, "People are starving and jobless in this country and you're here crying about this proposal that we worked very hard for. Do this for your families." This brought clapping and cheering from the audience and the voting began.

"Our mission was to win annual wage increases, secure pension contributions, and quality health benefits to care for our families," revealed Hall, who was a member of the negotiating team.

"Our mission is accomplished," he told 160 members prior to a Friday morning vote at the Long Beach facility, "thanks to our union leadership and the diligence and commitment of the committee."

Negotiating Committee Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer Bob Lennox said, "We worked for many days, issue after issue, and this is the package that evolved out of that. This contract exceeds what is going on in this country, industry after industry."

The ratified contract brings annual wage hikes, a generous increase to employer contributions to the medical benefits, pension improvements, and contract



Local 495 President Rigo Tirado congratulates Shop Steward Jay Hall, who was a member of the negotiating team. "Mission accomplished."

language that protects jobs and seniority for the five-year contract. It covers a diverse membership including janitors, car washers, detailers, shuttle drivers, production workers, parts handlers, rail loaders and surveyors.

Toyota member Stephen Jones said, "I voted yes and I'm pleased with the contract, especially in

these difficult times. Also, I was very inspired by Jay Hall's speech."

Another negotiating committee member, Wes Brown, is also glad the contract was ratified. "Times are rough and right now companies are tightening their belts," he said. "We preserved medical benefits and won a raise ... this is a win for us."

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Toyota Contract

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The negotiating team included Secretary-Treasurer Bob Lennox, President Rigo Tirado, Wes Brown, Jay Hall, Shop Steward John Kobren, Cynthia Alailefaleula, Brenda Lopez and Robert Lares.

Brown gave credit to his fellow committee members for working hard to get the job done. "This committee was careful and thoughtful and didn't jump to conclusions. We were all concerned about our families and we were focused on doing the best we could for them." Brown offered special praise to negotiating committee members Bob Lennox, Rigo Tirado and John Kobren. "Bob was wonderful, he knows the job very well. Bob was Bob! And Rigo really understands the problems we face from a blue-collar perspective. And John knows the contract really well, including grievances, and people know they can go to him. Hats off to these three — and everyone on the committee."

Hall echoed Brown's sentiments. "The committee did a great job considering all the setbacks prior to negotiations.



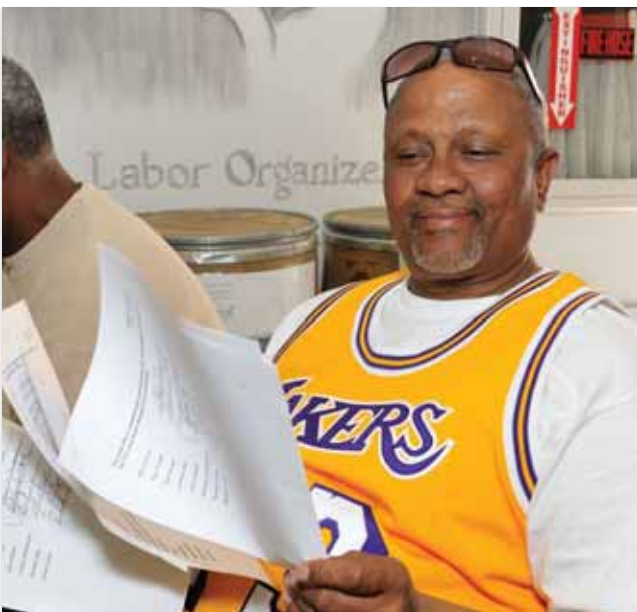
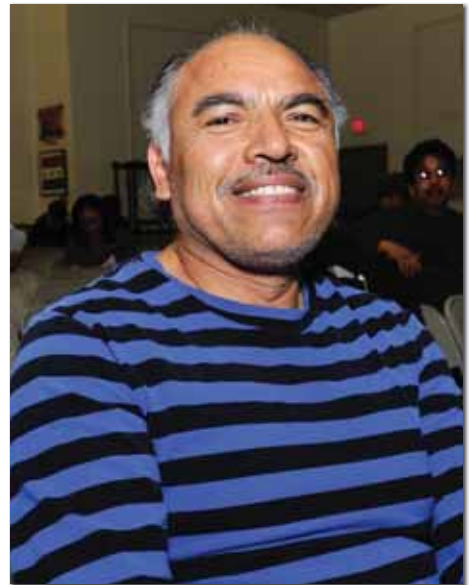
The negotiating team: (from left) Shop Steward Jay Hall, John Kobren, Brenda Lopez, President Rigo Tirado, Cynthia Alailefaleula, Secretary-Treasurer Bob Lennox, Robert Lares and Wes Brown.

Each member brought a unique perspective representing different areas within Toyota, such as the rails department, the shops and shuttle department. Thanks to the collective teamwork of the committee and the union, the wages, health care benefits and pension are secure for the next five years."

"It feels good that I know where I stand for five years," said Brown. "It's good to know I don't have to worry."

Hall summed it up best, saying, "Where there were obstacles we now have opportunities to make a great product and continue to grow together as a family."







Business Agent Gene Rivera

August 12, 1965 — January 15, 2012

Gene Rivera, the Business Agent who was on the front line in the victorious battle to save 65 jobs at the BMW distribution center in Ontario, passed away suddenly on January 15. He was 46.

His untimely death occurred slightly more than a month after what he termed “his proudest Teamster moment.” In recognition of the BMW success, he had been invited to England to join the leaders of a march of British union members. There he delivered a well-received report on how American labor unions take on corporations.

While Secretary-Treasurer Bob Lennox joined leaders in

a London march, Rivera was marching and speaking at a second rally in Brighton. British members cheered him when he told a crowd of thousands, “the workers of the world have a common goal and if we stick together we can accomplish great things.”

After working his way through high school, he was hired by the BMW Distribution Center in Ontario in 1991. Burning with a desire to help his fellow Teamsters, he eagerly volunteered to be a shop steward.

When a job opportunity as a business agent came up in 2006, Rivera was interviewed for the job. “I was so impressed with his exuberance, strength and confidence,” eulogized Bob Lennox, “that I hired him without interviewing any others. I could

see it in his eyes and hear it in his speech.

“Gene Rivera lived up to his promise. He was proud of his work and took on every job he could. Hundreds of people owe their jobs to his efforts,” continued Lennox, standing at the side of a prominent Teamster Local 495 banner that draped the coffin.

More than 300 family members, friends, and Teamster officials and business agents packed the Ontario chapel to hear Rivera eulogized as a “man who made a difference.” It was quite an accomplishment for the youngest of 15 children in his family.

Tribute was paid to him as a family man, a loving husband to his wife Frances, a caring father of three children and an over-the-top grandfather.

Gene will always be remembered for his big heart, compassion and commitment to the members and to Local 495.

We will miss him and never forget how hard he fought to help secure the jobs of our BMW members during our battle against the company in 2011. His leadership was an inspiration to us all and he will be missed and never forgotten.

— The Staff of Local 495



DOMINOES WITH WALT

Rich Johnson Retires After 52 Years at Disneyland



There aren't many people who can say they've played dominoes with Walt Disney -- or helped the Disney founder hide in his own theme park. But ask Rich Johnson, a long-time Local 495 member who worked at Disneyland as a ride operator from 1960 to 2012 and a shop steward from 1980-84. He recalled not only meeting Walt Disney on several occasions, but also having a long and fulfilling career working at Disneyland.



"I was not much of a dominoes player, but I had fun joining Walt a few times," Johnson reminisced.

On another occasion, Johnson helped Disney hide early one morning – an encounter he won't forget. "I was working in Fantasyland before the park opened at the Casey Jr. Circus Train Ride," he says. "Walt was

nearby. He looked up and saw a few supervisors coming and asked me, 'Where can I hide?'"

Johnson told him there was a booth by the train station. Disney went in and Johnson quickly pulled down the blinds.

The supervisors asked: "Have you seen Walt?"

Johnson replied: "Walt who?"

"When the coast was clear,"

Johnson said, "I told Walt he could come out. He had just wanted to walk around the park that morning



and not be hounded by people.”

These encounters with the Disneyland founder are just a few highlights from Johnson’s long career as a ride operator and foreman who worked at many attractions in Fantasyland.

“We are thrilled with Rich’s devoted service, and it has been a great pleasure having Rich as a union member for more than 50 years,” said Bob Lennox, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 495. “He has worked hard and been very committed to his job. We wish him all the best in his retirement.”

Local 495 members work on Attractions, Parking and Distribution for Disneyland. Local 495 and the former Local 88, which merged with it, have had members at Disneyland since 1955.

For Johnson, it all started when he graduated from Long Beach Wilson High School in 1957, then attended Long Beach City College for two years. In the spring of 1959, he recalls seeing an ad in the newspaper that Disneyland was hiring.

“I drove out there with a friend, and when I arrived, we were told they weren’t hiring,” Johnson recalls. “About 8 or 9 people sitting in the office walked out, but I went

to the desk and said, ‘I would like an application, sir.’ I filled it out and handed it back. The hiring manager then came out and said he wanted to hire me on the spot – and the reason was because I had showed initiative.”

Johnson recalls that his friend wasn’t happy on the drive back to Long Beach. “My friend was so mad, he didn’t talk to me!”

But for Johnson, it was the beginning of a 52-year career. He was hired to work for the summer on the old AstroJets ride. He received a great review, but didn’t make the cut to stay on staff. However, the hiring manager offered Johnson a part-time job as a bus boy at the Walt Disney Ranch in Palm Springs for the winter, and he accepted. Johnson was told that if he stuck it out for the winter, he would have a job waiting for him back at Disneyland in the spring. He was officially hired on May 11, 1960.

Johnson worked as a ride operator until he graduated from college in 1966. He also worked as a foreman for 20 years and was in charge of most rides in Fantasyland. He recalls the Mission to Mars ride was indoors with a theater and that visitors enjoyed the virtual experience of “lifting off” and heading to the moon.

“The 52 years went by fast,” Johnson recalls. “I never regretted going to work. I worked double shifts for the Christmas party. I even worked in the rain.”

“Local 495 is a great union,” he added. “The union serves an important purpose protecting its members. I will miss my colleagues especially.”

