



CONNECTIONS

Recall process is bad for union members

The recall is crazy. It's bad for democracy, it's bad for California and it's bad for all union members. We urge members of Local 853 and their families to VOTE NO on the recall on October 7.

The recall is NOT about Gray Davis. You can like Davis for what he's done for working people since he's been in office. He's signed important bills that restored the 8-hour day, ensured payment of prevailing wages, and increased unemployment and disability benefits. He has also appointed more than 120 union leaders to important commissions and jobs.

Or you can dislike him for having a lousy personality, being a successful fundraiser, and for a host of problems in California that may or may not be his fault.

But that's not the point. Seven million people went to the polls last November and Davis won fair and square.

But nine months later, some rich anti-union right-wingers put up a few million dollars to force the state into a new election just because they have the money. It took only 1.6 million signatures to overturn the will of 7 million voters.

Speaking of money, this special election will cost more than \$70 million. That's money that could have been used to cover the salaries of 2,000 teachers, firefighters, police officers or construction workers.

To save money, many counties will consolidate polling places. So even if you plan to vote in the October 7 election, your regular polling place may not be open. (Be sure to check your sample ballot for your special election polling place.)

It gets even crazier. The ballot will contain two questions:

First, voting on the recall itself. Again, we urge you to vote NO on this question.

Next, you can choose between 135 candidates—in the longest ballot in U.S. history—who had \$3,500, 65 signatures, and a desire to see their name in print.

Who are those candidates? Do you remember Governor Pete Wilson, who looked for new ways to destroy union strength every day? He's running Arnold Schwarzenegger's campaign and scripting his every move. There's no question that, if elected, Arnold will seek to terminate all of

the union gains that we've made over the last five years.

As a fallback, labor is uniting behind Cruz Bustamante as the best candidate to support union values. After you vote NO on the recall, be sure to vote for Bustamante.

Then there's the rest of the circus: pornographers, child actors, comedians, ferret lovers, failed high school government candidates... California is a laughing stock, but it won't be funny if one of these candidates—who has no record of governing or leading anything—actually wins.

Look at the numbers. It will take 50% plus one to stop the recall. But if the recall isn't stopped, the candidate with the most votes wins. That means, one million people might vote against the recall, but if that's not a majority, California's governor may be chosen by as few as 300,000 people.

It's like watching train wreck happen. This whole process is already damaging the state's economy, and it makes all of us Californians look foolish.

What you can do

It's all about voter turnout. The other side is counting on you to stay home. Be sure that you are registered to vote at your current address. If you're not sure, get a new form from your business manager and register again.

Then apply for an absentee ballot. Because so many regular polling places will not be open, voting absentee is the most convenient way to go. (Absentee ballots must be received by the County Registrar by September 30.)

Finally, confirm your polling place and vote NO on the recall on October 7.

Local 853 member makes front page news



(AP Photo)

This photo of Local 853 member Tury Escobedo (R), United States Marine, appeared in hundreds of daily newspapers across the nation in April. Escobedo is 20 years old and employed at Southern Wine and Spirits. Here, he is escorting Shoshana Johnson, one of the first POW's found, to a waiting transport plane. At press time, Escobedo and three other Local 853 members are still on duty in Iraq.

Vote NO on the recall – Tuesday, October 7

Maintaining strength in challenging times

By **ROME ALOISE**

While we at Local 853 confront the political and economic realities that challenge all unions and union families, we continue to focus on the bread and butter concerns for our members—maintaining good contracts and benefits.

Contract settlements

Thirty-three contracts covering about a quarter of our membership have come due this year. All in all, we've successfully negotiated good agreements—without any takeaways. These contracts should supply enough money to take care of future health care costs and leave some room for wage increases. In a few cases, strike action became necessary to show the employer we were serious.

The biggest issue for all of our contracts, in a wide range of industries, has been the cost of the benefit "package." The package—pension, health and welfare, holidays, sick leave and vacations—often comes close to the hourly wage rate.

With the cost of health care benefits estimated to increase 15%-20% each year, the employers have resisted continuing to fully cover monthly premiums. Because of this, our members have looked for creative solutions. They've weighed the options of moving to health plans that have co-payments for doctor's visits and prescription drugs, versus making increased monthly payments to keep their current plans. In most cases they've concluded it is better to spend a little money when using the bene-

fits rather than spend more every month on the contribution, whether or not they use the plan. This is a hard pill to swallow—excuse the pun—for our members, who enjoy one of the best health plans in the country.

Recently, members at Berkeley Farms chose to change health plans—putting considerable money back into their pockets and making them among the highest paid dairy workers in the nation. Additionally, our Ready Mix members decided to change their entire method of health and welfare contributions, enabling them to move to a plan with better benefits.

As always, Local 853 has led the way to bring these options to the members so that they can make the important decisions for themselves and their families.

No on Recall

California leads the nation in crazy politics. Right wing politicians have again succeeded in making Californians look like complete idiots. Just a few months after millions of dollars were spent to elect a Governor, now they want to spend \$100 million to try to get rid of him.

This is a disgrace for the people of California and more importantly, a real threat to our membership.

Very simply, the recall is aimed at Governor Davis because of all the good things he has done for working people. He re-established the 8-hour day, improved unemployment compensation, disability and worker's compensation, and supported prevailing wages among many other advances that we've supported.

Remember, every time you hear the "Terminator" talk about kicking out the "special interests" while deliver-

ing his lines—excuse me, speeches—he is talking about

Unions. You can bet, if he gets elected, all of the worker rights and protections we have gained over the years will come under severe attack. Don't be fooled, Schwarzenegger is a very rich, very conservative right-wing nut who has Pete Wilson calling his shots.

We cannot let the people who continually attack worker's rights get away with this. For Local 853 members, for all Union members and their families, the answer is clear: we must support democracy and vote NO on the recall.

If you are not registered to vote, call your business agent immediately to get the proper forms. The most important thing will be for you to vote in this upcoming election.

100 Years and Improving

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters is celebrating its 100th Anniversary this year. Many of our sister Locals in Northern California are 100 years or older and played an important role in the establishment of the International Union. Local 853's history goes back a century, if we include the Locals that merged with us in recent years.

The Teamsters Union has shown many different facets over the years, with a very colorful and often controversial past. I am happy to say that the current facet may be the best yet.

General President Hoffa has restored the stature of the Teamsters Union and has brought a very divided union back together to tackle the tough problems that face all unions today. I am proud of the influence our Local has with the International, and proud to be a Teamster.



Benefits Announcements

WCT Pension Plan Q&A

On the second Wednesday of every month, a representative from the Western Conference of Teamsters Pension Administrator comes to Local 853's San Leandro office to answer your pension questions. Call 510-895-8853 or 800-400-1250 for an appointment.

SIP 401(k) Enrollment

In addition to your traditional pension plan, most Local 853 members have the advantage of also being eligible for the SIP 401(k) Plan. If you are not yet enrolled, or wish to increase your pre-tax deferred amounts—check with your business agent, your company's HR department, or call 1-800-4-PRETAX [1-800-477-3829].

Teamsters Local 853

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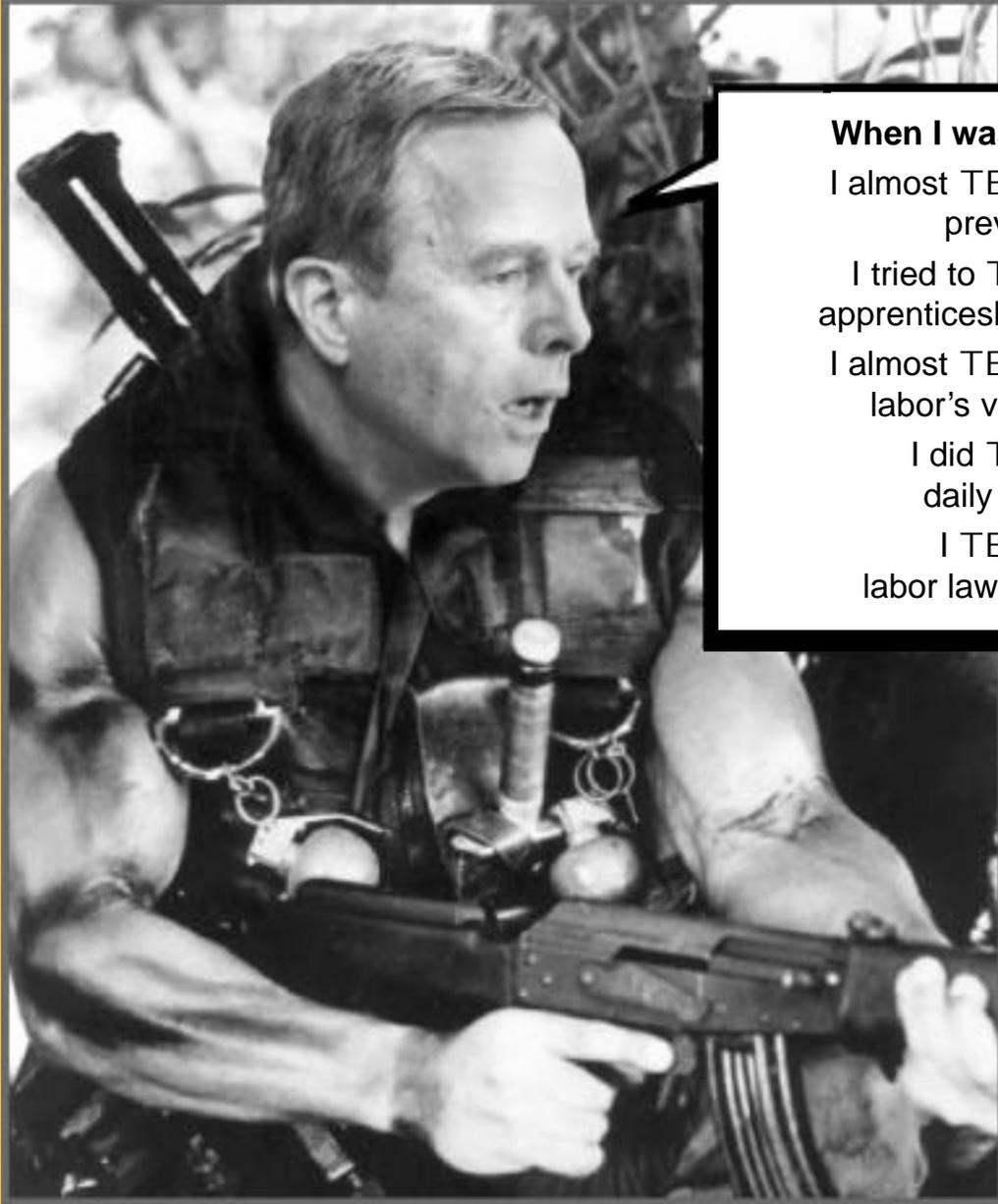
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Beagle & Bleiweiss Communications • Debra Chaplan, Editor

PETE WILSON:

I'M BACK!

MY OLD STAFF AND I ARE RUNNING THE SCHWARZENEGGER CAMPAIGN



When I was Governor...

I almost TERMINATED prevailing wages!

I tried to TERMINATE apprenticeship standards!

I almost TERMINATED labor's voice with 226!

I did TERMINATE daily overtime pay!

I TERMINATED labor law enforcement!

State Building and Construction Trades Council of California • www.sbtcc.org

THIS TIME, I'LL FINISH THE JOB!

HASTA LA VISTA UNIONS!

**Vote NO on
the Recall**

October 7

**Vote YES for
Bustamante**

Local 853 — Bigger and stronger after

Here's a brief timeline of the events that took place each decade since our Local was chartered in August of 1937:

1937-1950

Teamsters Local 853 began as a "General Warehouse" local union for the counties of Alameda and Contra Costa. Nick Nicolas was the first Secretary-Treasurer and Principal Officer of the Local.

Local 853 was started and grew out of Local 70, which had already been in existence for almost 35 years. Many of the trucking companies that were covered by contracts with Local 70 had inside workers who, in many cases, were not represented by Local 70, or for the ones that were, felt a need for a Local that spoke for warehouse workers' interests. Some of the first companies that were organized are East Bay Restaurant Supply, Jorgenson Steel (now Earle M. Jorgenson), and Morton Salt. Soon the Local was organizing food distribution warehouses with names such as Lucky Stores, Mayfair Market, and Louis Stores.

The Local grew with the assistance of a long-time member of Local 70, Frank Farro, who left after 30 years as a business agent and principal officer. To date, he is the longest serving officer of Local 853.



(CW from top left) A Local 216 construction driver in 1927; Opening the Collins Avenue building in 1964; Getting Gillig's first contract in 1977; The Local's leadership first elected in 1969 and shown in 1992: Ray Blasquez, Al Costa, Jerry Carbone.

1950s

Local 853 became involved in a huge jurisdictional fight with the warehouse divisions of the International Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU). The Teamsters Union formed two locals specifically to raid ILWU warehouses and bring them into the Teamsters Union.

Local 853 and Local 860 gave up various contracts to enable Local 12 and Local 655 to survive. Eventually, after a number of years of fighting one another, the ILWU and the Teamsters made peace.

Three of the most famous names in labor history, James R. Hoffa, Harry Bridges and Louis Goldblatt worked together to end the destructive fighting between the Teamsters and the ILWU and formed the IBT/ILWU Warehouse Council. This Council began to negotiate a joint agreement with hundreds of employers throughout Northern California.

The Master Warehouse Agreement and the Independent Master Contract were born out of this cooperative relationship that still survives today.

Montgomery Ward was organized early in the decade, and although now out of business, remains the single biggest employer in the Local's history. At one time, Local 853 represented almost 3,000 members at Wards.

Toward the end of the decade, the Teamsters left the AFL-CIO. This led to an upsurge of growth in Local 853.

The Western Conference of Teamsters Pension Plan was established in 1955. Nearly 95% of the Local 853 members participated in the Plan.

1960s

This decade signaled the beginning of the National Master Freight Contract, which resulted in unprecedented gains by the driving locals, which, in turn, led to big improvements in Local 853's contracts. Dental plans and orthodonture plans became more prevalent throughout the Local's contracts.

Trustee Ernie Souza was elected to the Executive Board, and still works for the Local as our building manager today!

Local 853 moved from its Piedmont address to the newly built office and meeting hall on Collins Drive in Oakland.

Lucky Stores became a hotbed of politics for the Local, producing three officers at the end of the decade: Al Costa, Ray Blasquez, Jr., and Jerry Carbone. These three young men brought new energy and an aggressive representation style that survives in Local 853 today. As the decade closed, most of the original officers and officials either retired or left the Local, leaving a local of about 4,000 members.

LOCAL 853 1937-

ALL THE STRONGER BECAUSE OF
THE LOCAL UNIONS THAT HAVE
MERGED WITH US

LOCAL 226

DAIRY

1903-1996

LOCAL 921

NEWSPAPER

DRIVERS

1938-2002

LOCAL 216

CONSTRUCTION

1904-1999

LOCAL 109

LIQUOR SALES

1939-1990

LOCAL 302

DAIRY

1912-1996

LOCAL 860

WAREHOUSE

1937-1994

LOCAL 291

CONSTRUCTION

1964-1998

six decades of representing workers

1970s

This decade was dominated by major strikes. Master Warehouse members went on strike for over a month. Al Costa moved from Recording Secretary to Secretary-Treasurer and Principal Officer. Lucky Stores and Safeway had strikes that lasted one month; and then, the infamous 1978 strike that lasted 19 weeks.

The Supplemental Income Plan was started with Local 853 being one of the originating locals. This plan enabled our members to have both a monthly pension and a large nest egg when they retired.

The Local began an aggressive organizing program which produced immediate results. Gillig Corporation was organized and struck for one month for their first Local 853 contract.

Within the first few years, the local grew from 4,000 members to almost 5,000 members by the end of 1979.

1980s

The Eighties could be called "From famine to feast." In the early part of the decade, the membership dropped to its lowest level in 30 years.

Montgomery Ward began to close down its operations, eventually leaving only the Product Service Technicians. More than 40 companies under union contract reduced operations, moved or simply went out of business.

However, the organizing program continued to replenish both members and new job opportunities. By late 1986, the membership continued to hover at 5,000. A number of companies that were organized during this time still remain in the Local: Len Martin



Annual Membership Appreciation Days got their start in 1998.



Left: International Convention in Philadelphia, 1996; Local 853 lends support to Basic Vegetable strikers in King City; Mobile Command Center at Safeway strike.



(now Federated), Celotex (now Certaineed), Anixter, Price Club (now Costco), to name a few.

The Teamsters Benefit Trust Fund was started (originally called the Northern California Labor Union Trust), as a small fund for Local 853 salespersons and has now grown to be a multi-union, multi-employer fund that covers members working all over Northern California.

1990s

Both Local 853 and the International Union went through enormous changes during the nineties. The Local continued to grow and faced its first major change in leadership in over 20 years, as long-time Secretary-Treasurer Al Costa retired and was replaced by current Secretary-Treasurer, Rome Aloise.

Local 853 led the fight to preserve the jobs of 1,500 Safeway employees when the operation relocated to Tracy, under a third party contractor.

Teamsters Local 109, Liquor Salesperson Union, merged into Local 853 in 1990. Southern Wine & Spirits, and Young's Market Valley were organized, making Local 853 the largest Liquor Industry Local Union in the west.

Local 860 also merged into Local 853, bringing together many similar contracts and employers from what was our "sister" local. We established the Local 853 West Bay office, as we also moved our East Bay headquarters from Oakland to San Leandro.

The International Union began a one-member, one-vote, system of electing our

General President and Executive Board. This made for seven years of political posturing, in-fighting, and an almost catastrophic split of the union.

Toward the end of the decade, James P. Hoffa was elected President of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Local 853 played a significant role in this election, with President Hoffa visiting our Local on several occasions.

During this 10 year period, the dairy locals, 226 and 302 merged into Local 853, along with the construction locals, 216 and 291. Some people predicted that the mix of all these different "work cultures" would cause problems. To the contrary, the combination of cultures has actually made for a much stronger and more militant local union.

2000 to the Future

As a large and diverse Union, Local 853 negotiated some of the best contracts ever in the Ready Mix industry and the Dairy industry.

The Local purchased its Mobile Command Center, which has assisted in many activities over the last few years.

Our membership has held steady in the face of the most recent economic decline, and we continue to organize. With the merger of Local 921's newspaper drivers in 2002, our membership now totals more than 6,000 spanning the East and West Bay.

Although, we face problems in many areas that will affect our members, the strong traditions and history that our Local has developed will keep us in a good, stable place to deal with whatever comes our way.



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Local 853 – organizing and building a stronger union



TeamMSters reach new heights in fight to cure MS

Local 853 members took to their feet, opened their wallets and utilized their power of persuasion to raise close to \$66,000 for research to find a cure for Multiple Sclerosis.

Local 853 Office Manager Janine Vanier organized 37 walkers to join the **TeamMSters** team for the 15th Annual MS WALK, held in Alameda on April 6-7. Rising to be the number one team in the Northern California Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, the TeaMSters are likely to reach a spot in the top five in the U.S. (Last year, with \$48,000 raised, the team was 9th in the nation. Janine was ranked 7th top individual donor in the nation.)

“As always, I have to credit Rome Aloise for this fundraising feat,” Vanier says. “This year we sent donation requests to all the Locals across the nation and Canada, as well as to our employers

and service providers. The response was overwhelming—and so inspirational.” Vanier reports that she received donations not only from Executive Boards, but also from the office staff of several local unions. “The support from so many Teamsters has been worth more than money can ever buy.”

Every TeamMSters participant reached their own fundraising goal—and then some. Local 853’s Accounts Receivable/TITAN Operator, Lydia Pinedo, formed a “Tamale Team,” and raised more than \$1,000 making, selling, and delivering fifty dozen tamales.

Vanier’s involvement in the MS Society comes from the fact that she has multiple sclerosis, herself. “Through volunteering and raising funds, I have made friends with so many wonderful, incredible people. I’m fortunate to be in such good health for having MS, and my life has become one of joy and faith in the people around me.”