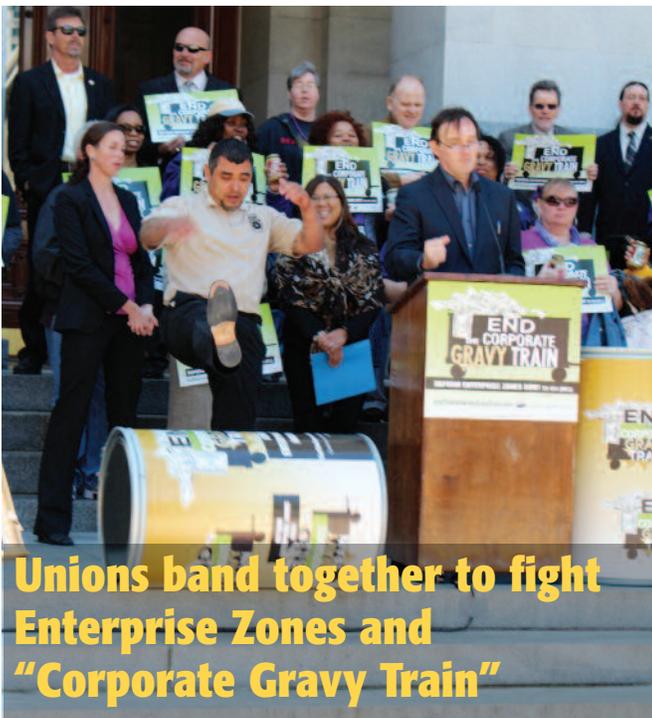




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Local 853 – organizing and building a stronger union



Unions band together to fight Enterprise Zones and "Corporate Gravy Train"

Local 853 trustee Ray Torres kicks the "corporate gravy train" down the Capitol steps. This action took place at a labor rally in Sacramento on March 19 supporting Sen. Jerry Hill's bill to dismantle California's Enterprise Zone system. In the last several months, long-time Local 853 employers VWR and BlueLinX have used the EZ system to close union facilities and re-open with state subsidies in other parts of the state.

Teamsters enjoy Battle of the Bay



On an overcast Memorial Day afternoon, more than 1,700 Teamsters and family members enjoyed a great tailgate barbecue (left) and exhibition game (top) of the Oakland As vs. the SF Giants. (The A's took it 4-1!)



CONNECTIONS

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It took lots of street heat.....

Teamsters get contract at DBI



Members at DBI San Francisco were on strike from 2:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.; in this case, it was long enough to get the company to come to its senses.

What did it take for 154 Teamsters to renew their contract at DBI San Francisco? Here's an obvious answer—solidarity....and a 14-hour strike. On May 4, the drivers, merchandisers, salesmen, and warehousemen at this Miller-Coors beer distributor ratified a five-year contract that gave them gains on economics and language, and did not include any of the nasty takeaways the employer had proposed.

Members fought take-aways

“The company had proposed weakening our union security language,” says Business Rep Efren Alarcon, “and that was a non-starter. That would mean undermining the union.”

Alarcon notes that DBI had an agreement with a different Local five years ago. “Unfortunately, the members accepted some takeaways during those last talks and the company figured they could take it even further this time.” In fact, DBI proposed reductions in sick and vacation days, lowering 401K contributions, and eliminating the Kaiser option—the chosen provider for 70% of the members at DBI.

But this time around, the company miscalculated. The members stood together and fought to protect their rights.

DBI forgets history

The company should have known better. In 2012, when contracts were open at DBI facilities in San Jose, Stockton and Sacramento, the Teamsters mobilized actions at Giants games at AT&T Park and elsewhere, gaining public support for the union.

“We held back in 2013, giving the company a chance to do the right thing,” says Alarcon. “But, after eight bargaining sessions were going nowhere, the members started feeling frustrated and disrespected by the company. On April 23, at 2:30 a.m., they went out on strike.”

In response, after the members were on the street for less than nine hours, DBI's CEO showed up and spoke with IBT International Rep Dennis Hart. “He gave his commitment to withdraw certain proposals that the union wanted off the table. We ended the strike, and he kept his word,” says Alarcon. It took another five bargaining sessions, but the committee finally got an offer they could all recommend. On May 4, the members ratified it.

Alarcon wanted to recognize and thank the bargaining committee for their hard work—Salesman Jaime Arias, Driver Matt Strachen and Warehouseman Oscar

Preciado. He also gives special thanks to Dennis Hart, who brings to the table years of bargaining experience in the beverage industry. Hart and Alarcon also recognized Local 856 for their solidarity and support.

When asked about lessons learned during the DBI negotiations, Alarcon was quick to answer. “Never underestimate the employer. And, make sure that the members know and trust the union team beforehand. That's the key!”

Friendly sparring!



Local 853 Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise with Attorney General Kamala Harris at the Teamsters Unity Conference held in Las Vegas in May, 2013.

Local 853 works hard for members on many fronts

By ROME ALOISE

Our Executive Board and staff have been working on numerous contracts and projects, making for a busy winter and spring at Local 853. Here are a few of the highlights.

Fight with VWR continues

One of our biggest battles recently has been with VWR. After more than 50 years as a Teamster employer in Brisbane, they closed down and reopened non-union in Visalia. We fought them here until the day they closed and then moved the fight to Visalia, where we assisted Local 948 in organizing the workers who took our members' jobs for more than \$14 less per hour.

VWR is the poster child for the fight against the way that Enterprise Zones—a state-funded employer subsidy—has been abused. The company refused to let our members move with them and then got paid by the government for “creating” jobs in Visalia. It is outrageous, and we intend to keep the pressure on VWR and the investment bankers that now own the company.

Back at Graniterock

On a good note, after years of bat-

ting with Graniterock in the streets and in the court room, we have settled our disputes with this company. In fact, we have recently started negotiations for the re-organized ready mix drivers in Redwood City and San Jose.

The change at Graniterock is a tremendous testament to our Local's reputation for never walking away from a fight—even one that lasts for eight years. At this point, we're bringing Graniterock employees back into our Local and, in turn, strengthening our hold in the ready mix industry.

New cement contracts

By a 97% margin, the drivers at Cemex and Central Concrete ratified a new three-year extension in April. The agreement provides for increased wages, higher pension and health and welfare contributions, and strengthened contract language.

Vice President Bo Morgan worked hard to make sure that the extension provided what our members needed going forward. This new contract continues to ensure that our members working in the ready mix industry are the highest-compensated workers in the country.

DBI deal

When DBI refused to move on language crucial to protecting our members rights and economic interests, we were forced to call a strike at the end of April. Of course, our DBI members were out there in strength. They were joined by Teamsters from other companies, along with our entire staff and representatives from nearby Locals. After just a few hours, the company called to meet, and it didn't take long for them to withdraw their egregious proposals. Our members returned to work the following morning. Shortly thereafter, they voted, by a large margin, for a new five-year agreement that maintained their health and welfare coverage and gave them wage increases in each year.

I could go on and on about the various issues that our staff work on daily—from promoting important legislation to vigilant contract negotiations to educating our shop stewards to be as effective as possible. The Officers and Officials of Local 853 are working for you on many different levels, and we never forget that the members come first.



Announcements

WCT Pension Plan Q&A

On the second Wednesday of every month, a representative from the WCT Pension Trust Fund 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

Most Local 853 members are 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].

Check out Local 853's website

Go to www.teamsters853.org to see what the Local has been up to between newsletters. Also get business forms and other union resources.

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Members: Send address changes and comments to the above address or e-mail us at connections@teamsters853.org

Charge your union dues

In our continuing effort to make dues payments easier and more convenient, Local 853 is now offering monthly credit card payments for your dues. For more information on this program, please contact the Local Union office at 510-895-8853.

Monthly union meetings

Local 853's membership meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the union hall: 2100 Merced St., San Leandro, **Note:** Sisters in Solidarity (Local 853's Women's Committee) meets at 6:30 every other month.

News from Local 853

Shop Stewards Seminar—Save the Date!

All shop stewards should plan on attending a Shop Stewards' educational seminar on Saturday, **August 3, 2013**. Contact Eve at x3370 immediately to RSVP, get event details, and give your jacket size.

Pepsi election victory

On May 22, the salesmen at Pepsi Sunnyvale voted 10-3 to be represented by Teamsters Local 853.

The Local already represents the drivers and merchandisers at that facility. Several of the sales group had previously served in those capacities and missed having union representation. "The company would unilaterally change their pay, applied discipline inconsistently, and wouldn't respond to issues that the salespeople raised," says IBT International Rep Dennis Hart when explaining what made the group want to join the union.

Hart adds that the company, which has a history of fomenting deceit elections and fighting organizing drives in surrounding areas, ran a typical anti-union campaign, "but Organizer Rodney Smith and Business Rep Jesse Casqueiro did a good job of letting our members know what to expect during a union drive."

The Labor Board has certified the election. Hart plans to bring the sales group together for a proposal meeting in early June, and expects to start bargaining soon after.

"This is a small but symbolic victory," adds Casqueiro. "It's the first campaign at a Northern California Pepsi facility that the Teamsters have won in many years." The organizing team hopes that this win bodes well for gaining ground in other Pepsi facilities, as well as with Coke salesmen.

Graniterock update

Fueled by a wealthy CEO who had money to burn in his effort to dump the union, Teamster Locals 287, 853, 912, and 890 and Graniterock had been on a collision course. Starting with a bitter strike in 2004, there were continuous lawsuits, strikes, NLRB charges, and decertification efforts that only ended when that CEO died in a boating accident in 2012.

Later that year, Local 853 Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise met with Graniterock's new CEO, Tom Squeri, to find new and less combative ways to move forward. After long negotiations with the four locals and numerous attorneys, both sides agreed to put the past behind and move forward to build a decent working relationship.

"The lawsuit and continual distraction of the dispute took away from what we needed to be doing—organizing the non-union ready mix companies that threaten our members' wages and benefits," said Aloise. "It was time to settle the disputes and move on."

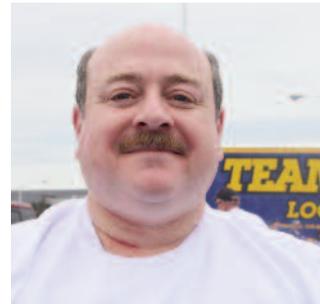
In February, 2013, after being out of the union, the ready mix drivers from Redwood City and San Jose contacted Locals 853 and 287 and wanted to come back. In March, by an overwhelming margin, they voted to have Teamster representation again. Welcome back!

Should the Teamsters continue sponsoring events like the Tailgate at the A's/Giants game?



Maria Lopez & Debbie Wesley
Durham Bus

"Definitely! It's very much fun. Shows how much the union appreciates and values us—certainly much more than our employer does."



Scott Sommer
Loomis

"This is my first event like this. It raises morale and feels like our hard work is being rewarded. I wouldn't have come to this on my own, so it's a great opportunity for me."



Jim Grady (& wife Denise)
GP Gypsum

"Definitely. This really creates unity. The Giants have a few more fans, but it's good for the A's to fill their stadium. Maybe the Teamsters could do a Raiders game in the future."



Bobby Quinn
Central Concrete

"Of course. It expands the camaraderie and is great for morale. The main benefit to me is that it brings together the different locals and enhances solidarity."



Darrell Windham & Jeanette Molex
MV Transportation

"Events like this offer a real family feeling—a good family connection with our union brothers & sisters."