

Texting and Winning

Local 853 launched a campaign to collect email addresses and cell #s so we can connect quickly with our members with information about important union business. To encourage sign-ups, we offered nearly \$10,000 in cash prizes to the first ten members who signed up and to a randomly-chosen group of 25 who signed up by the deadline. Not surprisingly, we got a great response. If you didn't yet sign up, it's not too late. **Text LOCAL853 to 877-785-3060** and follow the prompts until the end. Here's the list of lucky winners:

First Ten winners – \$350 each

Victor M. Avila, Costco Wholesale
Bernardo Bolantan, Kellogg's
Roberto Cisneros, Jr., Home Depot
Francisco Hernandez, Costco Wholesale
Ernest E. Lyon, WeDriveU
Tamara Malate, Costco Wholesale
Ron P. Martin, Anheuser-Busch
Martin D. Nguyen, Kellogg's
Jenny Ramirez, UPS
Robert Reese, Costco Wholesale



(Clockwise from left) Todd McBride at AB gets his check delivered by Business Agent Efrén Alarcon.

Ernest Lyon from WeDriveU got his check from Business Agent Tracy Kelley.

Three members at Costco Sunnyvale were winners and Business Agent Mike Henneberry delivered their checks: R-Top: Victor Avila, Bottom: Tammy Malate and Robert Reese.

25 Random winners – \$250 each

Joseph Amaral, Costco Wholesale
Presley Scott Baggett, RND/Youngs Market
Robert Arthur Branscombe, Ghilotti Brothers
David Brown, DHL
Juan Cortes, Safeway San Leandro Milk Plant
Zachary Davis, United Parcel Service

Darrell Dunlap, Cemex
Jeremy Dunlap, Costco Wholesale
Teresa Florez, Amports
Roger Graves, Southern Glaziers Wine & Spirits
David Koppel, UPS
James Wallace Latreille, Graniterock
Wisely Le, Transdev Business Solutions
Ismael Ruiz Ledesma, Golden Brands
Demar Linton, Central Concrete
Joseph J Marino, Young's Market Company
Ben Moala, Sysco
Ratu Rogers, Bottomley Distributing
Yvonne Pichardo, Genesis Logistics
Lilia Salinas, Home Depot Pro
Antony P Scott, Rock Transport
David Swindle, Tri-Valley Water Trucks Inc.
Nathanael Vazquez, Westside Concrete
Brian Keith Wilson Sr., ABF Freight
Manuel Zarate, Lithotype Inc.

Adapting to the pandemic.... Local 853 is on the case!

When the pandemic hit and California issued shelter-in-place orders in March, Local 853 immediately closed its offices to the public. "That doesn't mean that our work stopped or even slowed down," says Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise. "Most of our members were deemed 'essential' and had to go to work, and we had to ensure that they could work safely. For those getting laid off, our Business Agents needed to monitor that the contracts were being followed."

With more than 250 companies under contract, Local 853 is almost always bargaining a contract renewal somewhere. Initially, bargaining was put on hold, but it quickly became clear that it couldn't be avoided. Business Agents worked to get contract extensions that only dealt with wage and benefit increases, in hopes that the economy would bounce back before having to open contracts fully.

As the months rolled on, negotiations and grievances were moved to Zoom, "which creates its own challenges," says Aloise. "When you're doing in-person talks, you read people and you read the room. That aspect is taken away on Zoom. Basically, we have to adapt."

In most cases, contract ratifications went from in-person meetings to mail ballot. For example, Business Agent Efrén Alarcon reports that the 120 members at Anheuser Busch in Oakland overwhelmingly ratified a one-year agreement in August by mail ballot. "They got a 3% wage increase and full retro pay back to April 1. Hopefully, we'll be back to meeting and voting in person by the time this contract comes due again," he says.

Instead of voting by mail, drivers at Durham School Bus in

Oakland participated in a "Drive-by" contract ratification. More than 40 members came to the Local's parking lot and voted overwhelmingly to accept a new 3-year contract that included excellent wage increases. "This event was a good opportunity for the group to visit.

They're just hoping that schools can open soon and they can get back to work," says Business Agent Stacy Murphy.

When it comes to organizing, the pandemic has been both boom and bust. Far more workers understand that they're "essential," which gives them leverage to unionize. But it's also harder for our organizers to meet with them.

These days, all elections must take place by mail ballot, opened by the Labor Board only after the ballots sit for two weeks to shed any trace of virus. In July, the ballots for the Cardinal Logistics election were counted on Zoom. Reps from the union and the company observed as the Labor Board staffer opened each ballot, which were

unanimously in support of the union.

The Local started holding its monthly membership meetings on Zoom in May. Our annual Membership Appreciation event, which usually attracts 700-800 members, will be a two-part affair this year, with a drive-thru union gift giveaway and a Zoom "State of the Union" speech and raffle.

As for the future of the pandemic, Aloise has some advice: "Keep wearing your masks. Wash your hands. Follow the guidelines. Do the best you can—this is not going away any time soon."



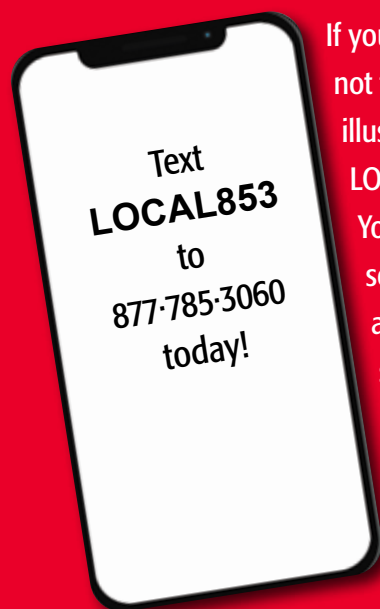
Top: Durham's drive-by ratification; Bottom: Zoom ballot count



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Local 853 – organizing and building a stronger union

Did you sign up for Local 853's new communications program?



If you haven't done it yet, it's not too late. As the handy illustration shows, just text LOCAL853 to 877-785-3060. You'll get some prompts so that we know who you are, and then we'll start sending you important news about the union and your contract (when it comes up). This is the best way to stay in touch with your union. Please sign up today!

Local 853 stands strong for Black lives



*T: We proudly display a Black Lives Matter banner on our Oakland HQ;
B: Members and staff participate in Strike for Black Lives event in July.*



Photo by Reginald Knighten



CONNECTIONS

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Fall, 2020

Teamsters say: Vote **NO** on **PROP 22**

Uber and Lyft are putting \$200 Million into passing Prop 22—rather than paying their drivers as employees. What does that mean and why is it terrible for Teamsters?

By now, you may have seen one of the TV commercials featuring a food-delivery driver talking about how he values his job and how “the politicians” are trying to take it away.

If you haven’t seen it yet, chances are that you will, because Uber, Lyft, Doordash and other so-called “gig economy” corporations are planning to spend a record-busting \$200 million to spread their misleading message about Proposition 22 on the November ballot.

Prop 22 was put on the ballot by these “gig” companies to exempt themselves from AB5. This law, that unions fought hard to get passed in 2019, seeks to end the misclassification of workers as “independent contractors,” and make all companies—including the ride-hailing app companies—pay into unemployment, medicare and social security just like our good union employers do.

The fact is, **Proposition 22 isn’t about preserving anyone’s job**, like the commercials say. Instead, it’s about undermining basic labor law Californians have put into place over decades to protect workers. We’re talking about fundamental protections like unemployment insurance, worker’s compensation, meal breaks and safety equipment. These **billion-dollar corporations** desperately want to avoid having to provide real jobs, and they’re trying to write a special law just for themselves so they can continue to avoid their responsibility.

If they get away with it, the door will be wide open for companies in virtually every industry to destroy middle-class jobs and replace them with low-wage, dead-end gigs to be filled by people who aren’t guaranteed a minimum wage, can receive no overtime no matter how long they work, and have to pay all their Social

Security and Medicare taxes out of their own pockets.

The stakes are high, and we can’t let them get away with it. That’s why Californians must vote No on Proposition 22.

These companies took on the taxi industry and won. Their plan is to turn every job into a “gig economy” job...and continue NOT paying benefits. That’s **unfair competition to our good union employers**—and will threaten EVERY job down the line, including our Teamster jobs. Sadly, if this law passes, what’s stopping our employers from turning our jobs into app jobs so they can stop paying benefits and better compete with the gig companies? Delivery drivers and trash haulers are already seeing the competition with gig workers—every job is at risk.

According to a recent University of California study, had Uber and Lyft faced up to their responsibility, they would have paid \$413 million into the state’s Unemployment Insurance fund between 2014 and 2019. But they didn’t. When the pandemic came, it was taxpayers who bailed out the drivers.

On those commercials, you will hear gig drivers say how they value the flexibility of their work hours. This is a talking point the gig corporations

have used repeatedly, asserting that they are acting to protect the interests of their drivers. However, there’s **nothing in current law that precludes the companies from paying their workers as employees while keeping their flexible work hours**. It’s a sham!

Make no mistake: Uber, Lyft and Doordash wrote Proposition 22 to benefit themselves, not their drivers, and certainly not us.

These companies are breaking the law, and they’re trying to buy themselves a new law that applies only to themselves. Come November 3, California voters must send them a strong, clear message: When it comes to shortchanging workers, the gig is up.

Vote NO on 22!

For more info, go to: SickOfGigGreed.com



Register to vote by 10/19 <https://registertovote.ca.gov> Vote by 11/3

Vote as if your future depends on it, because it does

By ROME ALOISE

You should already have received your 2020 ballot. If you haven't yet voted, please do so as soon as you can. Use the Guide in this newsletter and see our local recommendations at teamstersjc7.org/endorsements.

This edition of **Connections** is mostly about the election and your union's recommendations for candidates and propositions. Some of you follow these recommendations without fail, and some, unfortunately, ignore them.

I want you to know how and why your union goes about formulating recommendations and taking positions. We have a team that joins other unions in each county to vet and interview candidates for every office. We question them about their positions on the issues that impact workers and their unions. Our job is to let you know which politicians, based on their records in current and previously-held offices, reflect their support for the issues that affect YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES.

We need office holders to develop and support laws that protect what we negotiate, and protect you while you are working, including health and safety, workers compensation, lunches and breaks, and more.

You should vote to protect your ability to provide for your family first, last, and always. As a member of Teamsters Local 853, I would hope that you will not, like

many workers, vote for candidates and propositions that you are told are against your best interests.

Let's look at the current administration in Washington, D.C. I've lost count of how many negative changes to the National Labor Relations Act have been implemented. NOT ONE OF THESE CHANGES benefits those of us who work for a living. They all benefit the employers.



Our current President lied to workers about how he was going to help them. He has appointed employer-side lawyers to the Labor Board and they are systematically stripping the protections for workers, one by one. The Supreme Court, which had already undermined long-standing laws that protected the strength of unions, will now get more anti-worker and anti-union with the newest appointments.

These laws directly impact you, as someone who works hard to support a family, and who depends on your union to ensure you are protected and are compensated at a level that is second to none for

what you do.

Here in California, our top priority is to defeat Proposition 22, which is nothing more than very rich companies paying enough money to convince the public to allow them to write their own labor laws. Plain and simple.

While Uber, Lyft, Doordash, and "gig" companies like them make life convenient for everyone, this convenience should not be on the backs of the drivers and workers. These companies just don't feel like paying their workers minimum wage, workers comp, unemployment insurance, social security, and all of the other social protections that we have. To make matters worse, they want the rest of us to pay for all of this out of our own pockets and out of the taxes we pay.

They want you to believe that they cannot operate if their employees are actually employees covered by the law. However, this is a big lie! The drivers can have both flexibility and the protections that they deserve under the law. There is no magic to this; it is just that these corporations want to continue to pocket more profits by cheating their workers and the public.

Whatever you do, **VOTE NO ON PROP 22!**



Announcements

Monthly union meetings

Local 853's membership meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. They're currently being held over Zoom. To register, see the link on our website: teamsters853.org

WCT Pension Plan Q&A

Due to COVID, the WCT Pension representative is not coming to Local 853's office for consultations. If you have questions about your pension, call 800-845-4162 to arrange to talk with a Trust representative.

Charge your union dues

What's more convenient than paying your union dues with a credit card? For more information on getting set up, call the Local Union office at 510-895-8853.

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].

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

A Few Endorsements

U.S.

President Joe Biden
Vice President Kamala Harris

U.S. CONGRESS

District 1 Audrey Denney
District 2 * Jared Huffman
District 3 * John Garamendi
District 4 Brynne Kennedy
District 5 * Mike Thompson
District 6 * Doris Matsui
District 7 No Endorsement
District 9 * Jerry McNerney
District 10 * Josh Harder
District 11 * Mark Desaulnier
District 12 * Nancy Pelosi
District 13 * Barbara Lee
District 14 * Jackie Spier
District 15 * Eric Swalwell
District 16 No Endorsement
District 17 * Ro Khanna
District 18 * Anna Eshoo
District 19 * Zoe Lofgren
District 20 * Jimmy Panetta
District 21 * TJ Cox
District 22 Phil Arballo
District 23 Kim Mangone

STATE BALLOT INITIATIVES

Prop 15 YES

Increases Funding for Public Schools,
Community Colleges, and Local
Government Services by Changing Tax
Assessment of Commercial and Industrial
Property.

Prop 16 YES

Authorizes California Repeal Proposition
209 Affirmative Action.

Prop 22 NO

Changes Employment Classification Rules
for App-based Transportation and Delivery
Drivers.

CALIFORNIA SENATE

District 1 No Endorsement
District 3 * Bill Dodd
District 5 * Susan Eggman
District 7 No Endorsement
District 9 * Nancy Skinner
District 11 No Endorsement
District 13 * Josh Becker
District 15 * Dave Cortese
District 17 John Laird

CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLY

District 1 Elizabeth Betancourt
District 2 * Jim Wood
District 3 No Endorsement
District 4 * Cecilia Aguiar-Curry
District 5 No Endorsement
District 6 Jackie Smith
District 7 * Kevin McCarty
District 8 * Ken Cooley
District 9 * Jim Cooper
District 10 * Marc Levine
District 11 * Jim Frazier
District 12 No Endorsement
District 13 Kathy Miller
District 14 * Tim Grayson
District 15 * Buffy Wicks
District 16 * Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
District 17 * David Chiu
District 18 * Rob Bonta
District 19 * Phil Ting
District 20 * Bill Quirk
District 21 No Endorsement
District 22 * Kevin Mullin
District 23 No Endorsement
District 24 * Marc Berman
District 25 Alex Lee
District 26 Drew Phelps
District 27 * Ash Kalra
District 28 * Evan Low
District 29 * Mark Stone
District 30 * Robert Rivas
District 31 * Joaquin Arambula
District 32 * Rudy Salas

* denotes incumbent

For Local 853's local endorsements by county, go to:

teamstersjc7.org/endorsements

Around the Local

A little fire relief

The 2020 fire season started early and has been devastating, burning more acreage across California than in any previous year and destroying more structures.

For part-time UPS employee and Local 853 member Julia White Sanchez, the CZU August Lightning Complex Fire destroyed her home in Boulder Creek, in the Santa Cruz mountains. She's pictured here in front of the hotel that she's been staying at holding a check for \$1,000 from the Local. She's back to work and we wish her the best to get into a new home.



Julia White Sanchez gets a little help from her Teamster friends.

Hoffa Scholarship winners



Douglas Chin Lee and his son Austin Kainoa Lee.

Even amidst the pandemic, high school seniors graduated in June and many have started college. Their need for a scholarship was not lessened even if their college was moving to on-line learning.

Fortunately, the children of three Local 853 members won \$1,000 each from the James R. Hoffa Scholarship Fund. This year's winners were:

Austin Kainoa Lee, whose father, Douglas Chin Lee, works at Reliance Metals. Austin will be majoring in mechanical engineering at Seattle Pacific University and plans to be on the track team; Stephanie Wong, whose father, Jason Wong works at First Student; and, Nicholas Bellison, whose father, Joel Bellison, works at Gillig.

Union persistence gets member back to work

Luis Talavera has worked at Kellogg's in San Jose for 15 years. In May, the company terminated him for failure to do "lock-out-tagout," which is the safest way to fix moving equipment.

While Local 853 always advocates safety first, Business Agent Ray Torres joined with management to investigate the incident that led to Talavera's firing. "It turns out, even the company health and safety rep didn't know where the lockouts were and didn't know the purpose of E-stops," Torres says. "It was common practice to reach into the equipment carefully to fix problems."

The union continued to fight for Talavera. "The company offered to return him to work with half of his back pay and loss of seniority, but we didn't accept. We believed we had a strong case and meant to go full steam ahead," Torres adds.

The day they were scheduled to go to the arbitrator's office, the company asked to meet. "Ultimately, after Luis had been out of work for nine weeks, we got him reinstated with full back pay. Everything. He now chairs the safety committee and does lock-out-tagout training for the rest of the crew."



Luis Talavera (C) holds a check for nine weeks of back pay and benefits. The union fought to get his job back. At left is Business Agent Ray Torres, and at right is Kellogg's Chief Steward Eric Calderon.

Ready Mix members ratify lucrative contract extension

On July 18, the Northern California Ready Mix drivers working for Cemex and Central Concrete, who are members of Local 853 and 315, overwhelmingly ratified their contract extension by mail ballot. This contract impacts 600 members at facilities across the Greater Bay Area.

"Given the current circumstances brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the resulting inability to do most things in person, full-blown negotiations would have taken months and would have put areas of our contract at potential risk," said Local 853 Principal Officer Rome



Stewards from Cemex and Central Concrete are overseen by Business Agent Scott Gonsalves as they count mail-in ballots.

Aloise. "Getting an extension enables us to keep the protections our contracts give us, and provide for improvements, given the unknown future."

The two-year contract extension provides significant wage and benefit increases, an additional sick day, and language clarifications.

"Many thanks to ACA Chair Bo Morgan, and Local 853 Business Agents Scott Gonsalves and Eddie Venancio and Local 315 Business Agent Mike Hughes for working with me to sort through the details and get to a lucrative deal," said Aloise.