

# Teamsters Local 1205



Fall 2011

News

## Baumann Buses' First Contract *One Year Later!*

**T**his fall our Baumann Bus members are in the second school year of their first Local 1205 contract.

In 2009, when we were preparing to negotiate with Baumann, our country's economy was collapsing (as it has continued to do). Our federal, state, and local governments were slashing services; that included massively reducing funding to our school districts. Millions of people had become unemployed, and very few people anywhere were getting wage increases. In fact, almost every employer was freezing or reducing wages.

For instance, many *non-union*

First Student employees have not had a wage increase in at least two years. That is also true of many Baumann terminal managers. Employers everywhere were drastically cutting the quality of medical benefits and increasing employees' cost for those now inferior plans.

This was the atmosphere in which we began our Baumann negotiations. Baumann's attorney stated right at the beginning of our many intense negotiation sessions that a 5-year wage freeze would be appropriate. The company also insisted it would not contribute toward a Local 1205 medical plan,

nor would it change the guarantees.

Particularly given that environment, it is truly a cause for celebration that the average Baumann employee is earning 8% more today than when the contract was signed last year; that Baumann employees are enjoying less expensive and better Local 1205 medical benefits; that every Driver and DA has improved guarantees!

### *Important Economic Facts*

- A Baumann bus driver hired just before our contract will earn \$4.20 more per hour by the end of our contract—a compounded increase of more than 22%.
- A van driver hired just before our contract will earn \$4.05 more per hour by the end of our contract—a compounded increase of more than 27%.
- A DA hired just before our contract will earn \$3.50 more per hour by the end of our contract—a compounded increase of more than 30%.
- Members are saving thousands of dollars by being in Local 1205's Welfare Fund.

(See "Baumann Members Tell It Like It Is," page 6)

### *1205 Members at Our Annual Shop Steward Educational Workshop*



**Table of Contents**

**2** From the President

**3** Six Stories

**5** About Our Welfare Fund—and More

**6** Baumann Members Speak

**8** Victory: The New School

**9** From a Retiree

**10** Sample Grievance Victories

**11** Two Big Events

## From the President

Greetings, Sisters and Brothers! In this newsletter, proud members of Teamsters Local 1205 speak about our union. And they report on particular successes that affect all of us.

These are taking place at a time when, across America, corporate owners and the politicians and media they support are more than ever scheming to weaken and kill unions. A large part of that scheme is to describe unions and their members as greedy, overpaid, and a primary cause of America's present financial disaster! If the motive weren't so ugly, such a tale could be seen as very funny. Let's get this right: Corporations want people to believe that because unions insist on decent wages, affordable medical coverage, and the ability of Americans to retire in economic dignity—we're the bad guys!

What's really happening is: those leading the attack against unions are trying to have the nation's wealth stay in the hands of just a few persons—by making the vast majority of our citizens become poorer and poorer. To accomplish that, they have to kill unions.

### Three Statements for Our Time

As early as 1816, Thomas Jefferson said in no uncertain terms that we need to protect our democracy from those whose main interest is profit. He wrote: "I hope we shall crush in its birth the aristocracy of our moneyed corporations which dare already to challenge our government."

In 1938 Franklin Roosevelt spoke passionately against the efforts of corporations to control how people work and live in our nation. FDR told Congress: "The liberty of a democracy is not safe if the people tolerate the growth of private power to a point where it becomes stronger than their democratic state itself. That, in its essence, is fascism."

In 1970 the American educator Eli Siegel—whose philosophy, Aesthetic Realism, I respect tremendously—explained that economies throughout the world are failing because the injustice Jefferson and Roosevelt described is now also inefficient. He wrote: "There will be no economic recovery in the world until economics itself—the making of money, the having of jobs—becomes ethical; is

based on good will rather than on the ill will which has been predominant for centuries." Unions stand for that good will: for the *power of ethics*.

### What Every Person Deserves

If we don't understand and fight the viciousness of corporations and their political henchmen—or if we fight it only half-heartedly—we are doomed to lose our American rights. We shouldn't fool ourselves: if employers have their way, we'll go back to the days of sweatshops, to the days when it was illegal to protest brutal labor practices, illegal to join a union. To be able to join with your fellow citizens to pursue justice through collective bargaining is an American right that corporations and many government officials are trying to take away. People fought and died to obtain that right—it wasn't given to us.

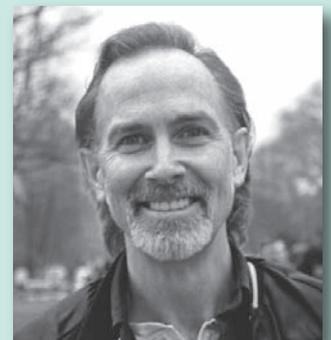
Brothers and sisters: when you hear someone attack our union or any union, know they are attacking the heart and soul of America. Your defending and protecting organized labor is the same as advocating for justice. The meaning of organized labor is so great, so magnificent—nothing can be allowed to divide us. We can talk about mistakes some unions make, or something silly some individual member does, but we should never, ever, let the discussion divert us from the main thing: honest unions created the middle class; organized labor is the most important force acting to establish dignity for every person who works. Unions are the biggest organized force working to push wages up; to protect and improve Social Security, Medicare; to bring about economic and social justice for all. And that's the reason unions are attacked and lied about.

As you'll see in the statements by Local 1205 members, what we're accomplishing together is what every person deserves!

In solidarity,

*Timothy Lynch*

President, Local 1205



## Six Representative Stories

### First Student Mechanics: A Lesson in Solidarity

Last year, ten First Student mechanics and one fueler working in Center Moriches organized to become 1205 members. They're now celebrating their first contract.



Our newest First Student members

After a number of negotiation sessions, the company tried to sell them an inferior contract offer. But these mechanics, with the encouragement of 1205 leadership, were preparing for a battle, and rejected the company's offer. They got ready to picket First Student, including at its other locations on Long Island. As the company saw they meant business, were unified and proud to be Teamsters, a new offer came forth—one that included much higher wage increases and contributions into the union Welfare Fund. It was a true lesson in solidarity.

Jim Trotto, our newly-elected Shop Steward, says: "We all stuck together. And we're all happy about the contract and the terrific increases we're getting." The average increase is \$4.50 per hour over a 2½ year period, and some are getting much

more. "Before the union, there was a lot of turmoil. Now, having the union behind us, giving us protection as the contract continues—it's a great feeling!"

### "It's Amazing!"

Local 1205 represents employees at 8 Dykes Lumber locations in New York and New Jersey. When Dykes purchased a non-union company in Closter, NJ, the drivers and yard men there were thrilled to learn they would be working in a union shop! Lou Struss, who had worked there for more than 3 decades, says:

"When I heard we'd be in the union, I thought, 'Wow, this is great!' But I really didn't realize how much improvement there would be.



Lou Struss

It's amazing—honestly. The medical alone saved me hundreds of dollars a month. Before, we had outrageous co-pays. Now we have hardly any. And the union plan is much better in so many ways." He was amazed that within two years of being in the union he'll be making \$4.60 more an hour than before. And he's thrilled to be in our great pension plan. He says:

"I worked for a non-union company for 30 years. If we had Local 1205 when I started, I'd be able to retire by now. It blows my mind. Meanwhile," he added humorously,

"with all my new paid time off, I hardly know what to do with myself!"

Lou spoke about the fakery of persons who try to poison people against unions—and about those taken in by it. He said: "You don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out how much good being in a union does you. It makes me furious when they talk so ignorantly against unions. People have to stop being stupid and realize all the benefits men and women in unions fought for. They're things everyone should have! I am so proud to be part of 1205. It's really nice to say 'I'm in the union!'"

### We Wouldn't Allow It!

Throughout the nation, employers (and certain politicians) are using America's economic agony as an excuse for what they've always gone after: trying to break or at least weaken unions. As part of this, many Local 1205 employers have tried to get around their contractual obligations to our members. These bosses often requested that we reopen our contracts to negotiate givebacks. *We wouldn't allow it!*

One particularly stubborn employer, Russin Lumber, refused to give a specific wage increase, mandated in the contract, to its over-the-road drivers. Russin made the bogus claim that the contract allowed the company not to pay it! We fought this, and filed for arbitration. And after arguments were presented and legal briefs submitted, *our members were awarded \$16,000 in back pay.*

(continued, page 4)

**Six Stories** (from page 3)

**“We Got What Was Ours!”**

Another employer, Island International, felt that since so many Americans had accepted pay cuts, and since a number of unions had been negotiating givebacks, 1205 should agree to re-open our contract and permit this company to cut wages and benefits. We would not! Nevertheless, the employer refused to pay the contractual wage increases of \$3.60 per hour. We fought the company for more than a year, determined to get for our members what had been bargained.

And we won. Our members now earn \$3.60 more per hour than when this employer began violating the contract. Further, as a result of our continuing to fight, which included our preparing to picket, *they are now being paid back all the lost wages*—more than \$70,000!

About this important victory, Dave Murray, a 15-year employee, said: “It was terrible what the company tried to do. But the way the union has stood by us makes me very happy. When you go up against a multi-million-dollar employer and beat them, it means something. 1205 is a



*Island International members & others from 1205 often deliver supplies to Ground Zero.*

strong union. And it’s done the right thing by us—not allowing union members to be pushed around. We’re all grateful. The company thought they could beat us up, but at the end of the day we got what was ours!

I’ve seen we have to stand together—and that you’re stupid if you don’t. If we’re divided, they can conquer us; united we can win!”

**“My Family & I Are Grateful!”**

In our so-called Great Recession, some of the highest rates of unemployment are in the construction industry. 1205, representing many members in that industry, has had its share of layoffs. Matt Vutera’s story stands for the economic dignity our union has fought for and achieved, even in these difficult times.



*Matt Vutera*

A Teamster member for 20 years and an employee at Nassau Suffolk Lumber for 10 of them, Matt was laid off in 2009.

“But,” he says, “Local 1205 didn’t stop looking out for me, and when a position opened at another 1205 company, Rael Sprinkler, Ed Williams called me and asked that I go for an interview. Timothy Lynch told the owner the new hire had to be an experienced 1205 member—and did not back down! I got the job.”

Matt assumed the wages would be in the very good neighborhood of the \$27 per hour, plus benefits, which he’d had before the recession hit. He was in for a very pleasant surprise. His new wage was more than \$32 per hour with the same great medical and pension plans. He says: “My family and I are so grateful! I breathe easier now, thanks to the great people at 1205.”

**“It Pays to Be a Union Member!”**

A source of frequent injustice in the school bus industry is that school districts and other customers can simply tell bus companies that the customer has disqualified a particular driver or driver’s assistant, and there is little anyone can do about it. This June, Baumann Bus informed two employees that they were suspended—because of an alleged customer request, without any evidence of wrongdoing or documentation from the customer. The union grieved the matter all the way to arbitration. The result: Baumann agreed to pay over \$1,200 in back pay to the employees! Further: in the event of any future customer disqualifications, the employer will provide to affected employees a letter from Baumann Bus stating who authorized the disqualification. Now the union will at least have a clear avenue to pursue if a disqualification is felt to be unjust.

Doug Kind, the unfairly suspended driver, said about the arbitration

he attended in August: “I was thrilled by the way the union handled the case. I’ll always be grateful. This is a perfect example of how it pays to be a union member.



*Clockwise: Doug Kind, Timothy Lynch, Martha Swiatkowski, Brittany Stokes*

Without the union, I would never have gotten back pay. I want to thank personally President Lynch, who handled the arbitration, as well as (Business Agent) Nelson Nuñez and (Shop Steward) Martha Swiatkowski for being there.”



Some Local 1205 and Benefit Fund staff. Top row, l-r: Sharon DiMaria, Nelson Nuñez, Camille Arnold, Ed Williams, Timothy Lynch, Sue Roth. Bottom row, l-r: Dan DeCrotie, Renee Rinaldi, Gary Kumpa, Anna Browe, Jackie Dowling.

## A Member Speaks about Our Welfare Fund—and More

Our Welfare Fund pays out hundreds of thousands of dollars every week for medical expenses. It enables our members to get their needed healthcare, and not have to worry about hospital bill collectors after an illness. With expenses going up and up, it's our goal to protect the health and welfare of our participants—a goal we'll continue to achieve if we all stand together, stay together, and fight for the decent benefits we all deserve.

A person who wanted to speak on this subject is Rich Swain, who has been a tractor trailer driver at Kleet Lumber for 14 years. (He and his co-workers led a very brief—and completely successful—strike in 2000, enabling them to be some of the best paid lumber workers in the country.) Rich is proud to have been a shop steward



Rich Swain

for many years. One night this past winter, he woke up feeling awful but never dreaming what he'd soon learn: he was having a heart attack. Before the night was over, Rich had 5 stents put into him. He went into rehabilitation quickly and was back to work in 7 weeks. He says to his fellow 1205 Teamsters:

“We've got to appreciate what we have. In our 1205 jobs, most of us focus on the good pay, but there's the whole package, including our medical. With what's going on in this country, with people losing pensions, losing medical coverage, working for less, we should never lose sight of our hard-won benefits. Almost every one of my bills was paid by our Welfare Fund. I never doubted that 1205 benefits would be there for me when needed, but I was shocked to see how much the Fund paid. One

hospital bill alone was over \$100,000, and our Fund paid all of it. I knew we had good benefits, but I really didn't know *how* good.”

Rich says too, about the union's support: “It was comforting to get calls from President Lynch and Secretary-Treasurer Ed Williams. With their busy schedules, they called me a number of times, rooting for me. Many co-workers called, and it encouraged me very much. It's clear that in this union you're not just a number. You don't feel you're just dust, being swept under the carpet. I'll never forget it.”

And Rich says this, about the importance of building greater union solidarity: “Everyone always gets on board at contract time, but we should stay banded together all the time. Our getting a new contract would be easier because management would see the membership bound together at all times, a well-oiled machine, with them unable to chip away at our strength!”

## *“The Union Came to My Rescue”*



**RICHARD RYDZESKI** has worked for Baumann Bus for six years and has considered himself a valuable employee in the Mechanics/Maintenance department at the Bethpage yard. So when his boss told him in January that his pay was being reduced by \$6 per hour and that he had to agree to a new position and title within two days or he'd be out of a job, he was in shock. Says Rich: “I almost had a stroke! I contacted the union, and they came to my

rescue immediately.” A grievance was filed and a meeting with

the company was held. The result: Rich remains in his current position, and not only was there no reduction in pay—in March he received the increase stipulated in the union contract.

Rich proudly asserts: “I’m sure that if it weren’t for the union I would have to take the drastic pay cut. Without the union the company would do whatever they want—like in the old non-union days—and we wouldn’t be able to do anything about it. Our members shouldn’t be afraid to stand up. The union is there to help us, without a doubt. In this bad economy, the union has improved our standard of living. On the benefits alone, I’m saving thousands of dollars a year. If people can’t see that, something is wrong with them!”

## *“I Wasn’t for the Union at First—but I Changed”*



**PAT FEZZA**, a van driver at the Bohemia yard, described honestly and strongly how “I wasn’t for the union at first—but I changed about that.”

He explained: “The company fired me. I called the union for help, and I got my job back! I have no doubt that I would not have my job if not for the union.” Commenting on what has happened since the Baumann employees became members of 1205, Pat

said he saw “how quickly things are changing for the better

because of the union. I’ve been surprised. Unfortunately, the company hasn’t come to grips with the fact that the union is here to stay. When they do, they’ll reap the benefits of the happier worker.”

Pat continued: “Even though I was against the union from the beginning, Local 1205 fought for me—and won! I’ll never forget that, ever. I go to union meetings now, and I’m glad to show my appreciation. The union is there, ready to back us up, 110%”



## *We Re*

**MARGARET**

school bus lot more p seeing tha resolved. W each other o away with not p advantage of us. T

“For instance, I filed a grievance wh DA to go home between two pieces of our us, the result was that we got an hour a c retroactively too! This never would have h company tried to scare me away from pur deared me to death. But the union backe Agent and Local 1205 Recording Secreta the company paid us for all the time.”

**JACKIE MEYER**, a Driver’s Assistant who a give another example of how Teamsters L “The union got us our wheelchair pay for wasn’t giving it to us, and my manager to When a number of us stuck together and and they saw that the union was good, wa people who were hesitant about the unio

## *“The Union*



**PAUL LECCO**

“I’d b company v saved my j was in need The se serious hernia and the union me

the union I was paying double what I’m p insurance, with lower co-pays. Also, I’ve j that the union plan is paying for. I’m very me to have a better, healthier life.”

As to those he calls “the few naysay than they do—because everyone needs to us. If not for the union I’d be jobless now,

## ***“With the Union, We Really Get Problems Solved”***

**T SESSA** (Three Village) has been a driver for 25 years. She says: “I see a lot of people believing in the union now. They’re not with the union we really get problems solved. We’re in a union for a reason: to help solve the problem. If we don’t, the company will get away with not paying people properly, taking away benefits. The union is stopping that. When the company tried to get me and my husband’s AM run. With the union standing up for us, they got day pay put back in our package, and that didn’t happen without the union. The company was pursuing the matter: they honeyed and flattered me completely. Sue Roth (Business Agent) is wonderful. She did not let go until

she also works at Three Village, wanted to join Local 1205 “helps us a lot.” She said: “I get my holidays and vacation. The company would not let me we’re not supposed to get it. The company worked together, others watched us—others were helping us. The result is, a lot of people who were at first are now coming around!”

## ***“The Union Is Enabling Me to Have a Better Life”***

**PAUL** (Commack) gave these examples: “I had been unjustly taken off my run—the company was going to fire me. *But the union saved my job!* Local 1205 fought for me when I was fired—when I thought there was no hope.” Another example is about health: “I had a heart problem and was in the hospital for five days—my medical plan covered everything! Before the union was paying now, and we now have better health care. I just had a needed weight loss operation and I’m grateful, because the union is enabling me to have a better life,” Paul stated: “I have a louder voice now to know how much the union is doing for me, and I’m out on the street.”



## ***From an Important Letter***

This June, **JOE SQUATRIGLIA**, a driver at the Coram yard, tragically died of cancer. Our business agent at Coram, Gary Kumpa, received a letter from Joe’s life-partner, **SUSAN PESCHKE-ALESSI**, also a Local 1205 member. Joe had signed up for the Local 1205 Welfare Plan, which includes a \$25,000 life insurance policy. Susan writes:

“I want to thank you for all you have done for me and my family and for Joe. You have shown us that we can all come together for the same purpose: helping our brother or sister. Joe respected you a lot (although skeptical at first). You made what seemed impossible become possible. I know Joe is looking down on us and saying, ‘Thanks for taking care of my girl and family,’ and he’s proud to be a Teamster.”

## ***“The Power of Thousands of Friends”***



**AL ANTON**, a van driver at the Bohemia yard, recently contacted Local 1205 because he wanted his co-workers to know his response to those in America who lie about unions. Al wrote:

“What do you get for union dues? Collective bargaining (recently outlawed for public sector workers in Wisconsin by its right-wing legislature). Collective bargaining gives you a contract, setting down the terms of employment, so the employer can’t do whatever he wants with you. It’s a legal document. And you get legal representation: having Local 1205 reps, like Dan DeCrotie, is like having an attorney on retainer. Ask: Without the union, what if you wanted to fight being unjustifiably fired? Nice to have the Collective Power of thousands of friends, all of Local 1205, to help you out—in fact, 1.4 million Teamsters.”

Al continues: “Grievances and arbitrations are like lawsuits. In the last year, Local 1205 has filed dozens of grievances on our behalf, as well as filing for more than a dozen arbitrations. Before the union, how many of you got suspended, short-changed on hours to be paid, harassed because the yard manager thought you took too long on your run, etc.—all without any way of your fighting it? How many times were you or a co-worker called on the carpet by the yard manager, treated like garbage, and found guilty without due process? Those days are over.”

He adds: “This November I’ll be earning \$1.70 more per hour than before we got our 1205 contract last year. Everyone has *guaranteed decent increases every year for the next 3 years*. In this economy, does anyone really think the Baumanns would give us these increases if not for the union?! If you do I have some swamp land in Florida to sell you! The company is fighting everything, trying to rewrite the contract. Thank God the union’s here—without it we’d have no voice.”

## Contract Victory at The New School — How It Happened

With the economy in free fall, with medical expenses skyrocketing, with pensions under attack, Local 1205 members working for the 8 colleges that make up The New School in NYC knew they were in for perhaps the biggest contract battle of their lives. They organized a winning strategy to protect and improve their hard-fought-for contract. They filled out contract surveys. They elected a bargaining committee. They met and talked about their priorities and options. Finally they were ready to negotiate with their employer—who had the gall to make outrageous demands across the board: in relation to medical benefits; sick days; the pension plan; leaves of absence; wages.

- Building solidarity with the 3 other unions that have members at The New School;
- Building solidarity with the many student body organizations on campus;
- Building solidarity with progressive organizations off campus;
- Building an internal communication network that led to detailed conversations with EVERY New School Local 1205 member about what's at stake, and how, through preparing for collective action, we can achieve our goals.

Standing together, united and determined to win what's fair, these workers not only demolished all the give-back demands—they achieved

great improvements that most members had initially believed were not possible, only wishful thinking:

- A five-year contract in which the employer will continue to pay, into our great Local 1205 Welfare Fund, 100% of the medical premiums;

- Large employer contribution increases into the pension plan, which not only improve accruals going forward, but greatly increase the pension payments members will receive upon retirement;

- Respectful wage increases, including job grade increases, that far exceed expectations;
- Many other improvements, including in how sick days can be used; increases in premium pay and meal allowances; more paid time off to attend union meetings!

These brothers and sisters knew they were the backbone of the university. They came to realize that the university's decision-makers would drop their give-back demands and agree to a fair settlement only when they saw that the members were willing and prepared to do whatever was necessary to accomplish the union's very reasonable goals. About the experience, bargaining committee member Kyle Triplett says:

“The employer made a draconian offer. But talking with my fellow members about our living being taken away and about what we as a union can do, people got excited about doing something about it. Our committee's offensive push-back galvanized the membership. Why would anyone accept those terms if we are united? I grew up in Michigan and saw the degradation of unions. We're in an era of give-backs—but here, our membership got great energy when they knew their union leadership, Timothy Lynch and Nelson Nuñez, would fight, and they stepped up. When the administration saw we had the strength and the leverage, it changed the game. I'm

*(continued, next page)*



*Some of our proud members at The New School*

The union negotiating committee, headed by President Lynch, rejected all of those insulting proposals, insisting there be no give-backs, and began an organizing campaign that included:

really proud of the membership. I was completely excited by what went on in negotiations. We were bulldogs, not letting them get away with



*Yolander Parker*

anything. To see our tenacious leadership fighting for the members, then our going back to the membership and telling them about it, led to everyone—across the board—being ready to fight. I'm so happy to be a part of this great union!"

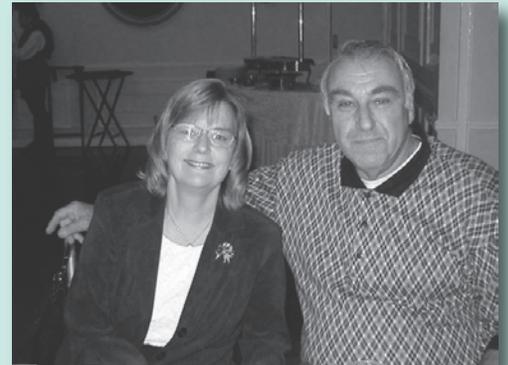
Chief Shop Steward Yolander Parker, who has been employed at The New School for 22 years, added: "This contract fight was beautiful. And the ratification had 100% approval." Asked what she thinks is the most important thing for our new members to know, she said: "Learn to work as a unit, not just an individual. As only one person, you can't get what you want—but as a union, we're so much more powerful. No matter what the administration tried to do, we showed them that this union will fight for what the members deserve! I really loved the way we stood together. I was very proud of everybody!"

## A Word from a Retiree

**RALPH LOBOZZA** retired a few years ago. He was a truck driver, a member of this union for over 30 years. Recently, he spoke about how pleasurable it is to be retired and how grateful he is for his monthly Local 1205 pension check. "Let me tell you," he said, "you don't see people with pensions like mine: over \$4,800 per month! My wife and I just got back from a leisurely vacation in Florida. It was really nice. We are doing the things we couldn't do while I was still working."

He cautioned the current working membership: "Never take for granted what you have because of the union. Support the local. Attend union meetings. It's in everyone's self-interest. Also, in going to meetings, you make friends. This union backs you up, but you've got to be in it together."

"In fact," he said, "I never really thought we could get the wage increases and benefits we did. When Timothy Lynch first negotiated a renewal contract with my boss—who was a very tough boss—I didn't think our president was realistic in his plans for me and my co-workers. But let me tell you something: from that first contract to the next two over the next decade, I was and still am truly amazed. Local 1205 was, among other things, able to triple my pension and greatly improve my wages and our medical plan." And Ralph continued: "When I spoke to one of my still working co-workers, right before



*Ralph Loboza and his wife, Catherine*

this winter's contract negotiations, I told him not to expect much in these tough times. But again, Local 1205 surprised me. The new 5-year contract calls for an over \$5 an hour increase in wages and full maintenance of medical benefits and pension, paid by the employer. That's unheard of these days."

Ralph had these wise words of advice for the rest of us: "Stick with the union. Don't let the bosses divide you, and don't be afraid. Everyone has to participate. No one will fight harder for you and your family than Local 1205. I witnessed this year after year. Everyone should be able to enjoy the retirement security I'm enjoying. I absolutely say: God bless the union! If it weren't for Local 1205, I would not be enjoying the life I have."

## Grievance Victories—A Dozen Samples

**N**early every day, somewhere within our local union, a shop steward or business agent is filing a grievance. Since our last union-wide newsletter, we have filed and won hundreds of grievances. Always, our purpose was and is to enforce our contracts—protect our members' rights! It's so important that we remain vigilant and not let employers ignore, misinterpret, twist, pretend not to understand what our contracts say: what we've earned through collective bargaining. Here are just a dozen sample cases—some large, some small—since our last union-wide newsletter:

**1. RIVERHEAD BUILDING SUPPLY.** A member was suspended indefinitely for refusing a direct order. After the union proved the company order was unjust, and possibly discriminatory, the member was reinstated and made whole.

**2. RIVERHEAD BUILDING SUPPLY.** Two drivers were unjustly terminated. After both cases were grieved, both members were reinstated to their jobs.

**3. RUSSIN LUMBER.** Arbitration settlement, granting 60 workers a day off with pay because the company falsely claimed a "snow emergency" to avoid paying wages.

**4. RUSSIN LUMBER.** \$5,500 in back pay for a number of members who filled in as Foremen but did not receive Foreman pay.

**5. EASTERN METAL WORKS.** A member was threatened with termination after being accused of negligently damaging company vehicles, but after the union proved to the company that they were wrong about the facts, no discipline was issued.

**6. BAUMANN BUS.** Arbitration settlement, granting 7 Big Bus drivers hundreds of hours in back pay.

**7. BAUMANN BUS.** Three separate cases of Brookset Mechanics being unjustly terminated. The union files for arbitration on each. Each member, not wanting to return, agrees to a generous financial settlement—worth many thousands of dollars—negotiated by the union. Rudolfo Pineda proudly states: "The Union fought for me, even

when I thought they wouldn't because I didn't want my job back. I thought I'd get nothing and was finished. Local 1205 never let me down!"

Carlos Ventura, who received a settlement worth more than \$10,000, says: "Thanks Local 1205! I'm very grateful for what you did for me."

### **8. NASSAU SUFFOLK LUMBER.**

Management was instructing non-union sales persons to transport product which only Local 1205 members are supposed to deliver. This was grieved—with the result that any product, no matter how small, will be delivered only by a union member.

**9. KLEET LUMBER.** Improper layoff of five members. The result of a union-filed grievance was back pay and benefits to all, amounting to thousands of dollars.

**10. FIRST STUDENT.** The union filed a grievance and an Unfair Labor Practices charge against the company at the NLRB (National Labor Relations Board) for the company's illegally imposed disciplinary policy.

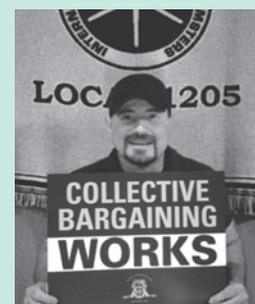
A settlement was reached that forced the company to rescind the policy and post a government notice that they were wrong in imposing it and would cease and desist from such activities. Many improper disciplinary notices were removed from members' files.

**11. DYKES LUMBER.** Reinstatement of 2 improperly laid off employees, one of whom, through an arbitration award, received over \$18,000 in back pay and benefits.

**12. SUFFOLK CEMENT PRODUCTS.** Arbitration award of thousands of dollars in back pay for members who were denied their earned paid vacation.



*Rudolfo Pineda*



*Carlos Ventura*

## Two Big Events—Local 1205 Was There!

Two very important and exciting Teamster events took place this summer.

### Constitutional Convention

From June 26 through July 1 in Las Vegas, thousands of elected delegates, alternate delegates, and guests came from all the states, Puerto Rico, and Canada to our IBT's 28th Constitutional Convention. President Lynch was the elected delegate representing Local 1205, and our elected alternate delegate was our vice president, Morgan Jamison.

There were nominations for all the International Executive Board positions—and in October, every member will receive an election ballot in the mail. Union democracy is tremendously important, and we urge everyone to vote! Attendees from across America heard about Local 1205 and some of our recent history as President Lynch spoke passionately from the convention floor about organizing and the important teamwork between an

individual local and the International Union. In VP Jamison's words: what he said received "a rousing ovation. The members should be very proud."

The IBT had asked the Aesthetic Realism Theatre Company, with which President Lynch is a performer, to present the musical and educational show *Ethics Is a Force!: Songs about Labor*. This show, President Hoffa wrote in a thank you letter, "helped us all remember . . . why we have unions."

Vice President Jamison said of the convention: "The unified power at Vegas was overwhelming. *Ethics Is a Force!* was fantastic, very motivational. I never heard anything like it."



Morgan Jamison

### Women's Conference

In New York City, during the Hurricane Irene weekend (August 26-28), the IBT's Women's Conference took place. And despite airport closings, disaster warnings, and a shut-down of city transit services, several hundred Teamster women (and some men) from across America were there, attending educational workshops and hearing guest

speakers, including General President Hoffa.

Near the end of the first day, on the other side of Manhattan, there was a great rally, organized to support the locked out members of Teamsters Local 814. These 43 courageous workers were unjustly put on the street by their greedy—and filthy rich—employer, Sotheby's Auction House, which is trying to force outrageous contract concessions. It was beautiful to see eleven Baumann Buses, chartered by the IBT, driven by Local 1205 members, transporting hundreds of Teamsters to and from the picket line!

Yolanda Pitter, assistant shop steward from the Northport yard of Baumann, said of the conference: "It was powerful, dynamic—



Yolanda Pitter

seeing all those hundreds of Teamster women united! I met so many women who do all kinds of different jobs: working the railroads, driving trucks, working in schools, and more. I'm proud to be a Teamster." And she added: "No one should have to be on an unemployment line. Our government should be creating jobs. They can make work for everybody."

As in Las Vegas, the IBT again sponsored the Aesthetic Realism Theatre Company's electrifying

(continued, back cover)



At the convention, Paris Hotel, Las Vegas.



Teamsters Local 1205  
 246 Conklin Street  
 Farmingdale, NY 11735  
 (516) 501-1205  
 www.teamsterslocal1205.org  
 email: 1205teamsters@verizon.net

Presorted  
 First Class  
 U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
 Wilkes-Barre, PA  
 Permit #188

## Your Right

Ballots for our union's International Officers' Election will be mailed in October! Our union democracy calls on all of us to exercise our important right:



## What's Inside:

From the President • Six Stories • Baumann Members Tell It Like It Is • Grievance Victories • Plus More

### Two Big Events (from page 11)

*Ethics Is a Force!*, in which, among other things, this is said—by President Lynch:

*The current attack on unions is an effort to have the land of America be owned, not by all, but by a few persons—who'll use its resources and the work of others to make profit for themselves. The courageous fight of unions in the last century, to get better wages and dignity for people, has been a saying: "This land—that raw materials come out of, that trucks roll across, that people live and work on—is ours, together. There's enough wealth in it for every person to live with ease—not have to worry about meeting their bills."*

"It was awesome!" said Julie Kramer, a shop steward at the Baumann Bohemia yard, about the performance. And she said about the conference as a whole: "It was an experience of a lifetime, an experience I'll never forget."

## Next General Membership Meetings

Wednesday, October 19, 7:00 p.m.  
 Riverhead Elks Club, 123 East Main Street, Riverhead

Wednesday, November 30, 7:00 p.m.  
 Knights of Columbus, 1 Morton Street, Farmingdale

Wednesday, December 21, 7:00 p.m.  
 Riverhead Elks Club, 123 East Main Street, Riverhead

***Come help build your union!***

### Local 1205 Executive Board

Timothy Lynch, *President*

Edward Williams, <i>Secretary-Treasurer</i>	Robert Christian, <i>Trustee</i>
Morgan Jamison, <i>Vice President</i>	Andrew Gallo, <i>Trustee</i>
Susan Roth, <i>Recording Secretary</i>	Nelson Nuñez, <i>Trustee</i>