

The Lather

Volume 6 Issue 1
January 2009



Location, Location, Location

Meeting Architectural Standards

There's nothing better than being in the right place, at the right time, with the right people. And that's exactly where the Local 46 Lathers have been recently. Chris Harrington, Bob Fontaine and Dave Hammer of Channel One Lathing are working with Elite Wall Systems, a subcontractor of E.W. Howell, to repair and replace the very old and very traditional lath substrate at the Century Association Club.

If ever there was a golden opportunity to display the professionalism that still exists within our ranks, it is here at this very private club; which for more than a century, has been a Mecca for New York's rich and powerful. Members of this exclusive hide-away tend to have names like Roosevelt, Rockefeller, Kissinger and Bloomberg. But aside from the political elite, this landmark building, designed in the Beaux Arts style of the 19th century, also opens its doors to those in the Arts and Sciences. Authors, painters and often architects of renown all set their proverbial hats down on the ornate mantle pieces from time to time. And when they do, no detail of their environment goes unnoticed.

The appearance of the exterior of this landmark building, which has been home to the club since 1889, is every bit as critical to club members as the interior. This became increasingly true after New York City buildings went smokeless several years ago, and the various aristocrats and aficionados who gathered to puff on their \$25.00 stogies were relegated to the "veranda" located outside the second floor of the building. Now, a thorough renovation is taking place. That is why Chris, Bob and Dave spent a good part of November at the club installing metal lath and Pittcon beads.

The beads are custom made aluminum reveal beads and when they are installed, all mitre cuts are made with an aluminum cutting "Diablo" blade. Razor blades are used to make the marks for the cuts because of the critical need for accuracy. Even the width of a pencil mark is too wide. Work of this nature calls for zero tolerance for error, as anything less than perfect alignment might allow for water intrusion.

The bead work frames out a 3.4 gal-

continued on page 6

Inside this Issue:	
From the Officer's Desk	2
Securing our Energy Future	7
Labor History	8
National News	9

From The Officer's Desk



Robert A. Ledwith, *Business Manager Financial Secretary/Treasurer*

I hope you and your family had a Happy and Healthy Holiday season. As Americans, we are all blessed with so much. It is good to pause from our hectic lives, enjoy peaceful moments in reflection and spend quality time with our loved ones and our friends.

With the start of a New Year, it is apropos to report on the activities of your L.M.C.T. (Labor Management Cooperative Trust). In November of 2008 we joined the A.C.I. (American Concrete Institute). This prestigious organization monitors, studies and reports on the latest innovations and methods in Concrete Construction. It is always critical to stay ahead of the ever evolving technologies that affect our livelihoods.

Our radio and print ads continue to promote our Union and the high standards we have achieved as a Labor Organization.

The L.M.C.T. creates and maintains this newsletter. This is no easy task. We try to provide a fresh and up-to-date report on our jobs, our members and the issues affecting our families and our livelihood. We contribute to other publications such as Real Estate Weekly and the Ironworker. Work continues on our new web site and we hope to roll out our new web page which we believe will be more informative and interactive.

As we progress to achieve various Certifications, we work hand in hand with Evaluation and Certification Services, LLC and, in the near future, we hope to begin the process of achieving various certifications for our Trade. As our Industry evolves, more and more of us will be required to possess these pre-requisites. It is our intention to incorporate a curriculum, developed in conjunction with our Apprentice Program, which will provide the certifications of the future. We will also have a vigorous, parallel Journeyman Upgrading Program which will provide opportunities for all our members.

Twice a year your L.M.C.T. participates in

Seminars conducted by the Plasterers and Fireproofers' Association. We are tasked with educating architects in genuine Lath and Plaster Construction using physical models of our work and a power point presentation explaining our skills and our Trade. This is particularly important because most architects never see our work in the buff and it is important that they understand its complexity.

Your L.M.C.T. is also working closely with architect John Ferraro. His mission is to create accepted ASTM (American National Standards Institute) numbers (value engineered numbers) for the materials we commonly use in our inside jurisdiction. In the future, the Industry will refer to our 1½" carriers, not as "black iron", but as g CRC (galvanized cold rolled channel). This work will be supported by its own website and it will be linked to the Local 46 Homepage. What is important is that, after all our years in the construction industry, we will have professionally tested ASTM (value engineered) numbers to support our superior knowledge in the construction of ceilings. These efforts will further enhance our victories in maintaining hangers and carriers in the NYC Building Code and will raise our Trade to a new, professional plateau.

We are a founding member of HP-CIP-C (The High Performance Cast-in-Place Consortium) which is the labor management coalition instituted to combat the serious inroads of pre-cast concrete construction in our industry. There will be a particular emphasis on promoting post-tensioned reinforced concrete garages.

We have also become members of BAL-CONY (Business and Labor Coalition of New York), an organization whose primary objectives are to provide universal health care for all New Yorkers, insure a complete revamping of New York's infrastructure and work to provide union built affordable and middle income housing.

Your L.M.C.T. sits on the Executive

continued on next page

Robert A. Ledwith
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Robert A. Ledwith, *continued from previous page*

Board of the Metro Labor Communications Group which keeps us in touch with current events in the Labor Movement. It grants us access to all others who cover and report labor news. This connection helped us to maintain pressure on the Teacher's Union and, along with others, we were successful in having them pull their money out of a non-union affordable housing project in the Bronx.

In addition, we sit on a Committee created by the Murphy Institute of the City University of New York comprised

of Union Educators from the Building Trades, Public Sector, Health Care and others who are currently designing a totally new degree program at CUNY (City University of New York) which will eventually allow all Apprentice Instructors and other Union based educators to obtain a Bachelor of Science in Adult Occupational Education. This program augments our work with Greg Mantsios, Debby D'Amico and Danielle Olibrice of the Murphy Institute to secure 10 college credits from NYC Technical College for all Local 46 members who take certain Apprentice

and Journeyman Upgrade Courses. The Chairman of the Construction Management Department of the College, Tony Cioffi, R.A., has already accepted the Agreement, which now awaits the final signature by the President of CUNY.

As you can see, we are continuing to work hard so that you can be the best that you can be. The rest is up to you.



Terrence Moore, *Business Agent*

As you may know, the Business Manager and the Business Agents have recently attended many meetings regarding the work situation, and the present economy in relation to the Subcontractors, General Contractors, and Owners of the projects we work on. The discussion at these meetings has generally revolved around one basic question:

How are all of the parties going to get together in order to keep competitive under a stressed economic outlook?

The situation is like none I have faced over the past 21 years as an officer of our Union. Sure, there have been slow times when work was very tough to come by. This isn't anything new and it's something that all of us who have been around for a few years expect. The work situation over the past few years has been so good that many of us have taken things for granted.

About three months ago, one of our general contractors presented all of the Unions in the Building Trades a plan that he believed would narrow the gap between Union and Non-Union construc-

tion. This plan was aimed at 2 specific projects which were to be developed in Brooklyn. He believed at the time that he could build these projects at Union rates if we got together and "relaxed" some of our conditions. The following was discussed:

- 8 hr workday
- Makeup Day on Saturday for inclement weather during the week, at straight time
- Working Shop Stewards
- All men at their work stations at starting time (including deck work).

These modifications were aimed at two individual projects. The General Contractor was hopeful that all trades would pitch in to make these jobsites work more economically, and be developed 100 percent Union. During our ongoing discussion over these two projects, the country was hit by our current financial crisis. Suddenly, we were thrown into an entirely different situation. Many jobsites that were about to be developed were placed on hold or cancelled. Jobs with foundations completed and waiting for superstructures have been boarded up or put on hold indefinitely. Overnight, the banking industry established new criteria

for lending to developers. Developers then went to our General contractors, Subcontractors and the Building Trade Unions to somehow come up with a plan to be more competitive. A plan that began with two projects has turned into an over-all industry wide state of emergency. One suggestion was to actually declare a state of emergency which would last from six months to a year. No raises would be taken during this time, and jobsite conditions would be relaxed. We have been told that if we don't find a way to reduce the cost of construction by 15-30 percent, many of these projects would be cancelled. In the end, our employment situation would be devastated by the end of the first quarter of 2009. Our subcontractors soon added prefabricated rebar (by others) to the list above.

This situation has turned the office upside down in many respects. First, why would we initiate changes to weaken our working conditions or salaries after we just signed a six year contract through collective bargaining? How does any officer go to the membership AFTER an election and tell them we need to make any changes? More importantly, how do any of us turn our back on the problem? Do we stick to "the way things are" and

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Terrence Moore, *continued from previous page*

risk losing even more of our market share to the Non Union workforce? These are some of the issues we have been wrestling with.

Difficult decisions have to be made in the months ahead. Ignoring our problems won't make them go away. If you read this and have any ideas you should

talk to the salaried officers. You should also make sure to attend Union meetings over the course of the next few months. Fighting with each other won't get anything accomplished. Working together will. Be watchful of any political posturing for the sake of personal gain. Our interests should be one and the same. We need to ensure the livelihoods of the next

generation of Local 46 members. We need to do this TOGETHER. We can never be defeated from the outside, only from within.



Fred LEMoine, *Business Agent*

A Healthy & Happy New Year to All!

I hope that all of you and your families had a very Merry Christmas. Looking back, 2008 was a decent year for our union. We had an abundance of projects which employed and expanded our membership. Our funds are healthy in spite of the financial crisis that has hit our country, state, and city.

Unfortunately 2009 and 2010 do not look to be as promising. I know that no one likes to hear bad news, however, knowledge is the best defense against the precarious times that we are about to confront. We are fools if we think that the recent economic meltdown that has hit so many institutions in our nation recently is just going to pass us by. I have read several forecasts for construction employment in our city over the next 2 years. The first half of 2009 should remain pretty busy. Starting in the second half of 2009 and increasing as we move further into 2010 we could see unemployment as high as 30%. If you have not already started, I would suggest saving for a rainy day right away.

To our many senior members who continue to work, I ask that in light of the anticipated decline in employment you consider gracefully moving into the next phase of your lives, retirement. Your contributions to our union are

truly appreciated. We realize that your hard work and dedication have helped preserve our way of life. However, as you know our younger members do not have an option of collecting a pension during the rough times to come. Your retirement will mean one more job for a member to provide for his or her family during these anticipated difficult times. I also ask members that have other careers, such as firemen, policemen, sanitation etc, when you see that employment opportunities are declining "please be considerate of your brother members that do not have other jobs."

In the past few months we have had numerous meetings with Developers, Construction Managers, General Contractors, Sub-Contractors and our affiliated Trade Union Brothers. In essence, we are being told that the Financial Institutions and Real Estate Owners are insisting that we need to reduce total construction costs by 25% in order to keep contractors in business and our members working. While I do not believe everything that I am being told at these meetings, I do believe that there is a crisis at hand. Declining real estate values and tightening credit markets are drastically changing the economics of our industry. We have to make some difficult decisions going forward if we are to maximize job opportunities for our membership. There have been many projects canceled already and many more on hold.

During the past few years, I have

been an advocate of Project Labor Agreements for many different market sectors of construction at varying wages and fringes. I was hopeful that these agreements could be negotiated during busy times while our membership was fully employed. I have taken this position because of the continuing encroachment of the non-union on our industry and the obvious economic differences in each market sector. Unfortunately, we will not have the luxury of crafting these agreements during a boom. We will be crafting these agreements out of necessity.

Please be assured that my fellow officers and I know how hard our members work. We want to keep as many of you employed as possible. I realize that much of what I have written is hard to swallow. I do not enjoy conveying this type of news; however, I feel it is my duty, as one of your Business Agents, to make sure that you are aware of what lies ahead so that we can take precautions now. So now that we know what lies ahead for our Union in the very near future, the question becomes: What do we need to do to protect our Union today and into the future? I encourage each and every one of you to attend our union meetings so that we can all become better informed to help build consensus going forward.



Kevin Kelly, *Business Agent*

The Construction Industry has always had its ups and downs. I'm sure you have heard this over and over again; but let us remember, many of our members are new. They have not seen or felt hard times because we have enjoyed a nine year economic boom in New York City. Our pension has increased to one hundred dollars per vested year starting January 1, 2009 as a result of good times and intelligent funding.

When things change for the worse, it usually happens quickly, and we all know bad news travels fast. We have seen and heard this in the sub-prime market, Housing Industry, Banking Industry and Auto Industry. Our industry is no different. Difficult and uncertain times are here. All General Contractors, Construction Managers and Sub-Contractors are looking at how they will compete for work to survive these times.

If developers can't secure loans for private sector projects, these projects will not be built. Let's say you have the money to build, but you weren't so sure you could make a decent profit, would you take that risk yourself? These are real pressures during tough times in our industry that have people making big decisions every day. *To build or not to build?* This question has never seemed so complex, but it is.

We have a great Union. I ask you to come to union meetings so you can hear first hand what is going on and who we are meeting with. On the job, we must bend, install and tie our work faster, safer and up to specifications to ensure our future. Doing the work right is more important than ever, because this is what will set us apart from the non-union worker and contractor.

Our new President, Barack Obama, has spoken often about policies that will help the middle class and Main Street; the right time is now. I believe he will sign an Executive Order allowing Proj-

ect Labor Agreements (PLA) on federally funded projects. The Employee Free Choice Act is a tool which will be very important to all working people. This will allow workers that sign a pledge card and are part of a majority at their work place to have union representation negotiated on their behalf. Letting workers have a real choice without the fear of losing their job is exactly what this country needs now.

Our infrastructure will finally get the financial support from Government that is so desperately needed, rebuilding our highways, bridges, sewerage treatment plants and schools bigger and better than ever.

It will not happen today, but we will put many members to work as these great changes become our reality. So, it's not all bad news; we will get through the tough times together by sharing the work we have.



Ronnie Richardson, *Business Agent*

Over the last few months we have seen the stock market hit record lows and cause money lending institutions to falter or look to the federal government for financial help. General contractors and real estate developers who do not have a credit line can not pay their subcontractors who, in turn, can not make payrolls and are unable to start jobs. Despite this economic downturn, as I write this, we have not felt much of a slowdown. But, that could be because most of our current work consists of projects that were already in the pipeline and not new work.

This directly affects the hiring of any new Lathers. Although we recently accepted applications for apprenticeship, how many apprentices join our ranks and when they come into the program depends on the amount of upcoming work we have going forward and the employment status of our current members.

On a positive note, President -elect Obama has stated "a strong economy depends on putting people to work and creating new jobs." He has promised to do this by allocating billions of dollars to rebuilding our infrastructure and all public works. These are prevailing wage jobs where Union Building Trades do the work, providing the mid-

dle class with decent wages and health benefits.

We are also fortunate in the fact that while so many people in the American workforce are losing savings and retirement through IRA's, we, as Union members are in an enviable position. The Local 46 Pension is still well funded and our Stable Value Fund with New York Life remains healthy.

Meanwhile, we must continue to be the best we can in the workplace and as for me, as your Business Agent, I will protect what we have, and try to create new jobs. Last, and not least of all, continue to work safe for yourself, your family and your coworkers.



Al Gerosa, Executive Director, Cement League & Employer Trustee of Local 46

Hello and Happy New Year. Welcome back to another year of "The Lather." We want you, as a member of Local 46, to know not only what is heard around the Union Hall,

but everything the Union leadership and the Trustees are doing to help the membership.

This Newsletter is a tool, like any other. It is a place for you to get information. I believe a well-informed member is a happier member and one more likely to promote the trade.

Many Unions operate in secrecy, but not Local 46! They are proud of their past and their contributions to the construction industry, just as I am proud to have been a Trustee of this Union since 1969. So you be proud, and let everyone know:

YOU ARE A LATHER.



Chip Langan, Apprentice Coordinator

Iwould like to wish you and your families a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

The Learning Center is, and in the future will continue to be, one of the most important tools we have.

The Learning Center is not just for Apprentices, but for all members. Attending the Journeyman Upgrading classes is the best thing you can do now to make yourselves more employable in the future. We need to be the best Lath-

ers we can be, and with the direction the economy seems to be headed, it might be a good time to upgrade your skills in all facets of our industry.

The certifications in OSHA 10 and OSHA 30, the Rigging course, Blueprint Reading, Tag writing and Rebar Bending, the 4 hour Scaffold user, and Unbonded Post-Tensioning courses are all offered as Journeyman Upgrading Courses. I am pleased to report that, so far, we have gotten a lot of interest in the Blueprint Reading, Tag Writing and Rebar Bending courses.

According to Commissioner Robert D. LiMandri, the NYC Department of Buildings will require an OSHA 10 renewal every five years, effective July 1, 2009. If you are among those whose card is older than July 1, 2004, you must call and make an appointment to enroll in a new OSHA 10 class. Please call the Learning Center at 718-267-7500, so that we can set up classes as soon as possible.

Remember, SAFETY is not just a word, it's a way of LIFE.



Bill Hohlfeld, LMCT Coordinator

Meeting Architectural Standards, *continued from front page*

vanized self-furring (dimpled) lath which will receive a high end finish of three coat cement plaster. Early in the project there was a brief discussion of using an exterior insulation

finishing system (EIFS), which is basically synthetic stucco applied to styrofoam, but that notion was rejected as "temporary."

As everyone in the New York construction industry knows, when you want

a product that isn't temporary, that will last forever, you want genuine lath and plaster construction. And, you want it installed by genuine Local 46 Wire Lathers.

NOTICE:

The Long Island chapter of the Local 46 Retiree club has a new meeting schedule.

**They meet @Faraday's, 17 W. Main St. Smithtown, NY
on the first Tuesday of every month at 12:30 P.M.**

Securing our Energy Future



Arthur (Jerry) Kremer, *Chairman, New York AREA*

Immediately following the 2003 blackout, a group of concerned New York business, labor, environmental and community leaders joined together to form the New York Affordable Reliable Electricity Alliance (New York AREA). New York AREA's growing membership now includes more than 150 members representing hundreds of thousands of union workers, business owners and leaders of the environmental community who recognize that our need to secure a dependable and ample supply of electricity is greater than ever.

On behalf of our members, I am pleased to welcome Local 46 to our growing team.

This past summer once again demonstrated our region's growth in electricity demand. In June and September, Con Ed announced that New Yorkers had once again set new records for peak electricity use; the June statistics recorded the delivery of 12,987 megawatts to customers over two consecutive days. Then in July, Con Ed's 3.2 million customers consumed more electricity than Vermont or Alaska use in an entire year.

What's more, on August 15 we observed the unfortunate anniversary of the 2003 blackout which left 40 million in the Northeast without electricity for up to 40 hours, costing the New York region more than \$1 billion in economic losses.

New York AREA's continued message is that the need for additional supply has never been greater, and we can no longer wait for a magic solution to appear. We must put in motion today the solutions that will help us meet our demand tomorrow.

New York families and businesses are under intense pressure to make ends meet as we face growing layoffs, a staggering economy and soaring energy and electricity costs.

It is no secret that New York needs additional electricity generation. According to the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO), New York State will need an additional 2,750 megawatts by 2017. The critical first step is the reauthorization of the Article X power plant siting law which streamlines the siting process to facilitate the construction of new (and much needed) power facilities.

As a key member of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and with the current air quality challenges New York faces, it is unlikely that new coal power plants would meet public and legislative approval. While clean coal technology may hold promise it is years away from being a reality.

New natural gas plants still carry air quality and environmental concerns, compounded by the skyrocketing of natural gas prices; hydro power is a clean and reliable source, but in New York it has largely been built out to capacity.

More wind turbines can also provide some relief, but have frequently run into

Not-In-My-Backyard, "NIMBY" community opposition upstate, on Long Island and even on Staten Island. The challenges facing wind are compounded by the fact that, like solar energy, wind power is intermittent as it is subject to nature's whim. Wind and solar also require large tracts of land while providing only minimal megawatts.

For these and so many other reasons, it is critical that nuclear energy remain a foundation of our state's diverse energy portfolio.

Nuclear facilities such as Westchester's Indian Point Energy Center produce reliable, low-cost electricity that powers our trains, our hospitals and our schools. Indian Point employs more than 1,000 workers – many of whom are union members – and contributes more than \$700 million in economic activity to our region annually. The 2,000 MW of electricity produced by Indian Point are also generated emissions-free – an important step needed to improve the quality of the air we breathe.

New York AREA will continue to build support for practical, common-sense initiatives that create jobs, protect the environment and fortify our state's electricity supply. We are proud to partner with the hard-working men and women of Local 46 in this important mission.

NEW MASTER'S DEGREE IN LABOR STUDIES AT CUNY

For more information about the program and the application process, contact:

Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies

(212) 827-0200

www.workerred.org

January Labor History

Terrence Powderly was born January 22, 1849. Powderly is most remembered for leading the Knights of Labor ("KoL"), a Labor Union whose goal was to organize all workers, skilled and unskilled, into one big Union united for workers' rights and economic and social reform. He joined the Knights in 1876, became Secretary of a District Assembly in 1877 and was elected Grand Master Workman in 1879. At that time, the Knights had around 10,000 members. He served as Grand Master Workman until 1893.

Like most Labor Union men of the time he advocated an eight-hour day and the abolition of child labor. The Knights also helped to organize Unions for women and African American workers. By 1886, estimates for "KoL" membership range from 700,000 to 1 million members, including 10,000 women and 50,000 African Americans.

The Union was recognized as the first successful national Labor Union in the United States. During the next decade or so, the Knights of Labor achieved their greatest influence and greatest numerical significance. Powderly attempted to focus the Union on cooperative endeavors. Eventually, the demands placed on the Union by its members for immediate improvements, and the pressures of hostile business and government institutions, forced the Knights to function like a traditional Labor Union. However, the Knights of Labor were too disorganized to deal with the centralized industries that they were striking against. After the Haymarket Square Riot in Chicago on May 4, 1886, Powderly refused to support anarchist Knights accused of inciting a bombing. Membership dropped off sharply because of the Knights' alleged and unproven association with the Haymarket bombing, and rampant factionalism divided the Union.

Many KoL members joined the newly formed American Federation of Labor (AFL) which promoted craft Unionism over the one all-inclusive Union concept. Powderly was defeated for re-election as Master Workman in 1893, but the decline of the Knights continued, although local assemblies continued to exist for decades. Powderly wrote a history of the Knights, but did not participate in any of these formations after his defeat.

Powderly, a resident of the Petworth neighborhood in Washington, D.C., in the last years of his life, died on June 24, 1924. He is buried at nearby Rock Creek Cemetery. His autobiography, [The Path I Trod](#), was published posthumously.

He was inducted into the U.S. Department of Labor Hall of Fame in January 2000.

On the National Scene

Obama's Win Spells Hope For Workers and their Unions

Democrat Barack Obama's huge win in the race for president Nov. 4 means things are looking up for America's working people and their Unions.

The overwhelming financial and campaign support Obama drew from the labor movement, and the commitments he made to workers and Unions as he campaigned, suggested positive action should be coming on all fronts, from better access to health care to the creation of more jobs to fewer roadblocks in the way of workers who want to unionize.

While there are concerns that the huge economic problems facing the nation will slow the incoming president's agenda, most Union Leaders see solid

forward movement ahead.

Declared AFL-CIO President John Sweeney: "We reclaimed our country from those who are serving corporate interests and the privileged at the expense of everyone else. We have taken the first crucial steps for our children and grandchildren."

Labor's support for Obama was overwhelming, and it was reflected in the turnout and choices of Union Members. One in every five voters was a Union Member, according to an election-night survey, and two of every three Unionists who cast their ballots did so for Obama.

In two telling exit poll statistics,

Obama won among white men who are Union Members by 18 percent. Overall, he lost among white men by 16 percent. And while he won among gun owners who are Union members by 12 percent, he lost that group in the general public by 25 percent.

Desperate to avoid what all were convinced would be four more years of Bush Administration anti-labor policies if Republican John McCain became president, labor poured as much as \$300 million or more into the campaign, while Union activists knocked on millions of doors and made even more phone calls.

The effort paid off, not just in the Presidency, but in the House and Sen-

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Obama's Win Spells Hope for Workers, *continued from previous page*

ate. Pro-labor Democrats strengthened their control of the House, and in the Senate as well—but perhaps not enough to stop Republicans from talking to death by filibuster any measure that displeases them.

At the top of that list is Labor's number one priority, the Employee Free

Choice Act (EFCA), which would make it easier for workers to unionize. Obama has promised to sign it if it makes it through Congress, and the House passed it last year and is expected to do so again early on. Whether it can make it through the Senate to reach Obama's desk is the big question.

The nation's business community has launched a well-financed campaign to defeat the measure, declaring that it would spell "economic armageddon."

Obama's Economic Recovery Plan: 2.5 Million Infrastructure Jobs

Faced with assuming the Presidency in the midst of the nation's worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, President-elect Barack Obama in November outlined a recovery plan he said would provide 2.5 million jobs by rebuilding roads and bridges and modernizing schools while developing alternative energy sources and more efficient cars.

"These aren't just steps to pull ourselves out of this immediate crisis. These are the long-term investments in our economic future that have been ignored for far too long," Obama said in a weekly Democratic radio address.

"We'll put people back to work rebuilding our crumbling roads and bridges, modernizing schools that are failing our children, and building wind farms and solar panels," Obama said.

He also made a commitment to fuel-efficient cars and alternative en-

ergy technologies "that can free us from our dependence on foreign oil and keep our economy competitive in the years ahead."

The plan embraces many elements of Labor's job-creation agenda.

Obama said he hopes to get the plan quickly through Congress, with help from both parties, after he takes office Jan. 20.

He said the plan, which envisions those new jobs by January 2011, is "big enough to meet the challenges we face." The President-elect said he has asked his economic advisers to flesh out the recovery plan—one "big enough to meet the challenges we face ... We'll be working out the details in the weeks ahead, but it will be a two-year, nationwide effort to jump-start job creation in America and lay the foundation for a strong and growing economy."

In his address, Obama noted the

growing evidence the country is "facing an economic crisis of historic proportions" and said he was pleased Congress passed an extension of unemployment benefits in November. But, he added, "We must do more to put people back to work and get our economy moving again."

Nonetheless, he said, "There are no quick or easy fixes to this crisis, which has been many years in the making, and it's likely to get worse before it gets better."

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., said Congressional Democrats will "continue pushing for aggressive but necessary measures. Part of that is passing a substantial economic recovery package, like the one President-elect Obama discussed ... that creates good-paying jobs here in America and stabilizes a volatile market."

Major Contracts Negotiated, Signed

Several major Collective Bargaining Agreements have been negotiated by the nation's Unions in recent weeks.

- Some 125,000 employees of New York City were to vote by Dec. 8 on a tentative agreement with the city that calls for a total of 8.26 percent in wage hikes over two years, with preservation of health and pension benefits. Declared Lillian Roberts, executive

director of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees District Council 37: "This gives our members the clarity and economic certainty for the future that they deserve at a time of a deepening economic crisis on the federal, state and local levels. This contract also acknowledges how important our members are to maintaining the quality of life in this city. This is a great deal."

- Teamsters members ratified a new three-year national master agreement with a group of major auto transportation companies. The Union said the deal brings a "record level" of employer contributions for health, welfare and pension benefits, but no pay increase for the first two years. About 8,000 workers are covered. They had rejected an initial agreement that included not just the wage freeze for two

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years, but lower wage rates for new hires. The ratified pact increases pay for office workers in the third year and boosts mileage payments for drivers. It does not allow lower rates for new hires.

- 27,000 members of the Machinists approved a tentative agreement and officially ended their 57-day strike against Boeing Co. The contract features wage increases of 15 percent over a four-year term and lump-sum payments of \$8,000. Medical coverage continues with no increases in co-payments or deductibles, and there is stronger job security language.

- Some 14,000 employees at 33 Catholic Healthcare West facilities in Northern California approved a new four-year contract negotiated by their

Union, United Healthcare Workers-West. Workers will receive pay increases of at least 13.75 percent over term. Covered are professional, technical, service, business, maintenance and other workers who are not physicians, RNs or managers. Negotiators will return to the table in 2009 to bargain over pension and retirement benefits.

- Members of Steelworkers Local 8888 in Newport News, Va., narrowly ratified a 52-month contract with Northrop Grumman Co. covering 8,500 shipyard workers. For more than half the bargaining unit, wages will increase by an average 16.4 percent over term, with raises coming every 13 months. Pensions will improve, and there will be changes in the percent-

ages paid by the company and workers for health care premiums.

- Six thousand Teamsters working at 12 Anheuser-Busch Co. breweries will get 15 percent raises in a new five-year contract and continue to see their employer funded health care premiums fully paid by the company. The contract also improves pensions and provides for increased life insurance policies, and pledges to keep all 12 breweries operating.

CWA Setting Stage for National AT&T Talks

CWA Leaders representing AT&T locals across the country met in Dallas in November to prepare for talks with the telecom giant beginning in early 2009. The pay, benefits and working conditions of some 270,000 workers ride on the outcome of the talks.

Although negotiations for AT&T Core will take place at six tables, in addition to bargaining for AT&T Mobility's "Orange" contract, the theme of the bargaining council meetings was one of solidarity: "One Union, One Fight, One Future."

"If we go in with a sense of unity, we couldn't be stronger," CWA President Larry Cohen told the 300 participants as he opened the conference. "This Union is sending a signal that we're fighting back. We're mad but we're hopeful and we're on the march. And we'll be on the march until every worker has a decent contract."

Contracting out of work, changes in job titles and job descriptions and other job security issues surrounding AT&T's consolidation of various former Bell companies were major concerns for participants, along with the enormous economic challenges facing the country and the never-ending attempts to roll-back health care benefits for workers and retirees.

For CWA, bargaining with AT&T coincides with its two biggest legislative campaigns—passage of the Employee Free Choice Act and health care reform. But working toward passing the vital bills won't stop CWA from fighting just as hard as ever for workers' rights and health care issues during negotiations, National Leaders said.

"We have to do two things at once, we have to be able to walk and chew gum," CWA Executive Vice President Annie Hill said. "The Verizon folks had to do it and the Qwest folks had to do it

because we were in bargaining while we were also focused on getting the right people elected." The AT&T Mobility bargaining will begin first, on Jan. 21, 2009 in Richmond, Va. The current Mobility "Orange" contract expires Feb. 7.

The Core talks will take place at six tables around the country beginning Feb. 24 to negotiate with AT&T Legacy, and with five regional contracts: AT&T East (formerly SNET), AT&T West (formerly PacBell), AT&T Midwest (formerly Ameritech), AT&T South (formerly Southwestern Bell), and AT&T Southeast (formerly Bell South). All contracts expire April 4, except for AT&T Southeast, which expires in August—but bargaining there will be held in unison with the other companies.

Fundraising Continues for National Workers Memorial

The National Labor College is about one-third of the way toward its goal of gathering enough contributions to break ground on a National Workers Memorial honoring working men and women killed on the job.

The memorial will be on the grounds of the college in Silver Spring, Maryland, near Washington, D.C. and, coincidentally, within a couple of miles of where legendary labor crusader Mother Jones spent her final years.

“This will be the only place in America where workers from all indus-

tries, all crafts, all walks of life who are killed on the job are memorialized,” declared United Mine Workers President Cecil Roberts at a Workers Memorial Day ceremony last April. “We build this memorial to honor and remember them and to remind us of the work that still remains to be done to make America’s workplaces as safe and healthy as possible.”

The college reported in November that 12 unions had pledged \$10,000 apiece. Along with other contributions, that puts the memorial fund at

\$175,000. Some \$500,000 is needed to break ground.

Contributions at all levels are sought, from National and International Unions, State Federations, Labor Councils, State, Regional and Local Union bodies, supportive organizations and individual donors. For further information go to www.nlc.edu or write: NLC Workers Memorial, 10000 New Hampshire Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20903.

SPECIAL NOTICE

Effective December 2, 2008, NYC Local Law 41 of 2008 requires an enhanced Site Safety Plan for any project for which Building Code Chapter 33 requires a site safety plan. Among other things, this plan will be required to include a statement **that within the preceding five calendar years all workers have successfully completed a 10 hour course in Construction Safety** approved by the United States Department of Labor Occupational Health and Safety Administration or a course covering substantially the same material approved by the Commissioner of Buildings. **The workers required by Local Law 41 to complete the training include all active trade workers as well as managers, foremen, and project superintendents working on the project site.**

Local Law 41’s new training requirements affect large numbers of construction workers. Because of their numbers and the limited time between the law’s September 3, 2008 enactment and its December 2, 2008 effective date, those whom the law covers are unlikely to have completed the required training by its effective date. Accordingly, to allow for sufficient time for all required to have the training to receive it, the Department of Buildings will phase **implementation of Local Law 41 of 2008 such that enforcement will begin no sooner than July 1, 2009 and will apply to projects for which building permits are issued on and after July 1, 2009.**

Bottom line: If you still haven’t received your OSHA 10 card, call the Apprentice Training Office @ 718 267 7500 and enroll in class today!

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