

# The Lather

Volume 3 Issue 1  
January 2006



## Diamonds in the Rough

see page 7



Tom Lyver, *Apprentice Coordinator*

I hope everybody's holidays were happy ones. One of the ways we helped spread a little Christmas cheer this year was by offering some training to our Ironworker brothers from Locals 40, 197, 361, and 580. Because our work became plentiful and theirs was not, some ambitious members of those Locals came to the Learning Center for what was essentially, Journeyman Upgrade. This is really what Union solidarity is all about, and we were proud to be part of that process.

At the same time, we are growing our own Local. As you know, 200 applications for apprenticeship were given out on October 17th. Many of those on line to receive them had been there, sleeping in the rain, for as many as 5 days. What a reminder that should be to all of us that it is a privilege to belong to this Local! At this

writing, all applicants have been given written and manual dexterity tests by the State, and interviews are being conducted to select what we hope will be the best candidates possible.

Other happenings on the horizon include new classes available this year in both CPR and Post-Tensioning. The CPR has been tentatively scheduled for mid February while no dates are available as yet for the Post Tensioning. In either case, please contact me **in writing** if you are interested in signing up. Phone messages are too easily missed or erased and we'd rather not disappoint anyone interested in upgrading his or her skills.

Inside this Issue:	
From the Officer's Desk	2
Local Labor News	4
Strike Alert	6
Retirees Corner	6
Diamonds in the Rough	7
Labor History	7
The Democratic Process at Work	7

# From The Officer's Desk



**Robert A. Ledwith**, *Business Manager*

**NION** I hope you and your family had a blessed Christmas and I wish all the best for you and yours in the New Year. The heading of this article is missing a letter **U**. Of course, **U** stands for **YOU** and what better time to reflect on matters than at the beginning of a New Year?

Our organization is comprised of all of us. Each and every day, each and every one of us has a responsibility to each other. We are not a corporation, not a private business nor a contractor; we are Local 46. Our strengths and weaknesses will always be among ourselves. The character and mettle of our organization is the sum total of all 1200 members.

There is a great deal that we

can do to make Local 46 stronger and even more respected by others. We should not always depend on our Brother Lather next to us to take care of matters; we should take our own initiatives to do the right thing.

As we work our different tasks on the job sites, we can make sure our work environment is safe for all of us. We can take care of each other. Our workmanship should always be professional and we should take great pride in the quality of our craftsmanship. We should profess each day that inherently, as Lathers, we believe in a **“fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay.”**

We can tie our rebar the proper way and install our ceiling work by the rules. When conditions on a job are ridiculous we can stand up and

be heard. At rallies and demonstrations our voices should be collectively heard. Our political involvement and activity will help make our legislators aware of our collective strength. If asked to picket a job site, we should consider it a duty of our membership and an honor to represent all of us. Notice should be taken that our benefits are paid each week on the job site and our history as an organization is understood. Our meetings are the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month (except summertime) and an effort to attend more of them would strengthen our position.

We can put the **U** back into the word and make it our Union. We can work together to take the letters **Non out of Non-Union. It is entirely up to us.**

remains in the Building Code.

Every day, each of us leave for work and take for granted that at the end of each day we will return home safely to our families. During the past year so much has happened and as you read this I ask that you think carefully about your work environment. Is there a lot of substance abuse within your workplace? Are you at risk due to this? Is it possible that you are putting others at risk because of your actions?

*continued on page 3*



**Terrence Moore**, *Business Agent*

First and foremost, I would like to thank you for your support during the November election. While I was unable to get to every job site, I believe I was able to get a fairly good picture as to what is happening within our industry.

While the reinforcing work continues to remain busy, our inside work has really never recovered since 9/11. As of late, most construction sites

have not been built with structural steel and the inside phase of our work continues to remain slow. I do not believe we are going to see this trend continue. Already, One Bryant Park and the NY Times building have started while the Goldman Saks Building will begin this spring. We must remain diligent in protecting our inside work. We are currently working with the Building Department, Mayors Office and the Fire Department to insure that use of Black Iron

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

Business Agents

**Terrence Moore**  
**Fred LeMoine**  
**Kevin Kelly**  
**Ronnie Richardson**

**John Coffey**  
*President*

**Brian Gibbons**  
*Vice President*

**Paul Q. Brown**  
*Recording Secretary*

Executive Board  
**William Cuevas**  
**Frank Connelly**  
**George Fernandez**  
**James Gibbons**  
**Eduardo Rivera**

**John McMurray**  
*Sergeant-At-Arms / Conductor*

**Al Scott**  
*Assistant Sergeant-At-Arms*

Trustees  
**Bob De Angelis**  
**Brian Maine**

**Tony D’Amico**  
*Trust Fund Administrator*

**Tom Lyver**  
*Apprentice Coordinator*

**Bill Hohlfeld**  
*LMCT Coordinator*

**Eileen Slattery**  
*Secretary*

**Gillian Clarke**  
*Secretary*

continued from page 2

I believe we all need to look at this. The last thing any of us needs is to be injured or be responsible for the injury or even death of a fellow Lather or any other Building Tradesman. There are little people waiting for big people to come home! If you believe you need help please call Tony at the Trust Fund. If you think anyone around you is in need of help please call the Business Agent in the

area. Your call will be kept confidential. You can make a difference in the lives of those around you!

I would quickly like to point out that anyone working on a truck unloading rebar should be extra careful. During the past year, there have been changes in the law which limit lawsuits concerning injury on any type of a moving vehicle (stationary or not). These changes

drastically limit your ability to legally protect yourself, should anything happen to you while unloading rebar or any type of materials from a truck. If you have any questions you can call me at 917-860-3563.

Lastly, I wish you and your family a great New Year.



Fred LeMoine, Business Agent

Happy New Year!

It's that time of year again when we reflect on our past and look forward to making plans for our future. In looking back at 2005, although we were unsuccessful in our bid to host the 2012 Olympics, and we did not get the West Side Stadium, we do have much to be grateful for. We negotiated a fair contract with our signatory contractors that rewards our members for their hard work, and will enable us to make improvements to our pension, trust, and welfare funds in the near future. We were able to secure an agreement with the NYC School Construction Authority which guarantees that all school construction work will be done by the NYC Building Trades through 2009. There are many projects under way and many more in the planning stages. We

will need member involvement in order to make some of these projects become a reality. The Yankee Stadium Neighborhood Development Plan and Ridge Hill Village are two projects I will definitely need help with in the Bronx and Westchester.

We were also very successful on the political front during this past year. I would like to thank all members who went to the polls and voted. The passing of the \$2.9 billion Transportation Bond Act will mean thousands of jobs for our members and other union tradesmen in the coming years. Many of our friends were re-elected or elected, most notably Mayor Mike Bloomberg, and Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrion Jr. On our local level we have a new Business Agent, President, Vice President, and two new Executive Board members. I have faith they will serve our Union admirably,

and I look forward to working with each of them.

We have witnessed an increase in project development which has created more jobs for our members and allowed us to once again recruit new members into our apprenticeship program. Over 200 men and women recently camped out at our Learning Center. For more than four days they waited in the pouring rain for an application for the chance to get into our Union. This was quite a sight to see, and should serve as a reminder of how fortunate we all are to belong to our Union.

I want to encourage all of us, as we start this New Year, to make a vow to take better care of *ourselves, families, friends,* and our *Union*. They are all gifts from *GOD* that need our constant *love* and *attention*.



Kevin Kelly, Business Agent

The New Year is upon us and I hope you and your family had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Employment opportunities look very good to start the year. I ask all members for their assistance in Brooklyn and Queens. We can make a difference together, one job at a time.

If you live by a school and work is being performed, please ask: 1) Who is

the General Contractor and the Sub-Contractor? 2) What is the address and the number of the school? Knowing the answers to these simple questions saves our union a lot of time and will allow me to better serve you, the members seeking employment. Member involvement is more important than ever; times are busy and current information from the field is critical to our success.

Several projects will be starting in the near future and I will be happy to fill

these jobs from the Hiring Hall. We have just interviewed 200 applicants for our Apprenticeship Program. Because our industry is busy we must have young people ready, willing and able to fill these jobs, as well as Journeymen and Foremen to help teach them the trade properly and safely.

Thank you for all your support in the last election. I am proud to be a Business Agent for the Members of this Local.



Ronnie Richardson, *Business Agent*

A Happy and Healthy New Year to all Lathers and their families, with special warm regards to Ken Allen in his long awaited and richly deserved retirement!

Let me begin my first Newsletter to all of you with my sincere thanks for giving me the opportunity to serve this Local. As your newly elected Business Agent, I consider it an honor to have your confidence and I assure you I will act accordingly. My approach to my new responsibilities will be no different than

my approach to every job I have ever done in the past - I will work hard to get it done.

Working as a foreman in the field for many years has taught me the value of planning, organizing and trying one's best to "expect the unexpected." I will continue to do the same while I am out there representing you and your interests. Another valuable lesson I learned is that nobody does it alone. The truth is, large projects and great ideas become reality, more often than not, as the result of team efforts.

Recognizing that truth, I look forward

to being a member of the team of elected officials that you, the members, have chosen. You have charged us with the responsibility of protecting our work and our rights, promoting and expanding our industry and forging ahead with improvements in our existing system. I refer here to ideas about upgrading the Pension Plan, an issue I have spoken about and which is most important to us all.

In short, what each and every one of you can expect to get from me, for as long as I hold office, is what I believe you deserve - my best.

## Local Labor News

### Movement Grows to Mandate 'Big Box' Health Coverage

Suffolk County, New York, is the latest government entity to pass a measure requiring "big-box" retailers to provide a minimum level of health benefits to their workers. Suffolk's bill resembles one passed last summer by the New York City Council, and was backed by a coalition of labor unions, unionized grocery chains and community organizations.

Suffolk's Fair Share for Health Care Act applies to retailers with 25,000 square feet or more of selling space, or with annual revenues of \$1 billion or more if the sale of groceries accounts for 20 percent of the total. Wal-Mart is one of a small list of businesses that fit the profile covered under the new law, which requires retailers to provide a minimum expenditure of \$3 per hour per employee

for health coverage.

Similar bills are being considered in Maryland, New Jersey and San Francisco. Maryland's legislature passed

their payrolls on health benefits or contribute to the state's health insurance program for the poor. The Washington Post recently reported that Wal-Mart has

#### Holiday Cheer is Live Again at Radio City

Traveling to New York City during the holidays? Be sure to visit Radio City Music Hall, where the annual "Christmas Spectacular" is back, with live music, after members of the American Federation of Musicians Local 108 ratified a new agreement following a 16-day lockout. Management put on the show with

canned music during the lockout, after trying to cut the \$133-per-show base pay of the 35 musicians-already about \$40 less than Broadway musicians earn. A mediator helped settle the new contract, which includes pay and benefit increases and continues overtime protection, according to the union.

a health care law last spring, but it was vetoed by Gov. Robert Ehrlich (R).

Maryland's measure mandates that large retailers spend at least 8 percent of

hired dozens of lobbyists to influence legislators in an upcoming vote to consider overriding the veto.

---

## Solidarity Charter Agreement Now in Place at Local Level

The AFL-CIO and the Change to Win federation announced they have reached agreement on a Solidarity Charter program that allows local Change to Win affiliates full participation in AFL-CIO state and local organizations.

“The heart and soul of the union movement is at the local level, in union halls across this nation,” said Sweeney. “The Solidarity Charter program unites our local labor movements to be the strongest fight-back machines possible against anti-worker corporations and politicians.”

Under the plan, locals belonging to any of the several national unions that have left the AFL-CIO will make per capita tax payments based on their membership to

state and local AFL-CIO organizations at the rates applicable to other affiliated locals, according to the AFL-CIO.

All locals, no matter which of the labor federations their parent unions belong to, will have the same rights to participate, including running for office.

The charters were negotiated in the wake of a summer of discord within the labor movement, when four large unions disaffiliated from the AFL-CIO. They are the Service Employees International Union, UNITE-HERE, the United Food and Commercial Workers and the Teamsters union. The United Brotherhood of Carpenters, also a Change to Win affiliate, dropped out of the federation in 2001. The Laborers Union and the Farm

Workers also belong to Change to Win, but maintain their affiliations with the AFL-CIO.

“Change to Win has always encouraged our local affiliates to participate in state and local bodies, and the fact is that they have continued to do so in the absence of an agreement at the national level,” said Change to Win Chair Anna Burger. “This protocol for participation that we’ve now agreed to nationally explicitly approves of what had been happening all along.”

Still under discussion in late November was a proposed fee to be paid by Change to Win unions to the national AFL-CIO to cover administrative overhead.

---

## Pro-Worker Governors Elected In Virginia and New Jersey

Despite a huge effort by far-right conservatives, voters in New Jersey and Virginia elected Democrats as governors on Nov. 8. Mobilization efforts by labor played a significant role helping to counter Republican predictions that President Bush’s reelection last year would lead to decades to GOP domination in electoral politics.

“These elections show that the tide will turn because working people are fed up with the big business special interest agenda and are ready to get involved to turn our country in a different direction,” said AFL-CIO President John Sweeney.

More than 7,000 union volunteers helped New Jersey voters elect former U.S. Senator Jon Corzine as governor. Corzine has a 100 percent AFL-CIO voting record on labor issues.

In addition, the New Jersey AFL-CIO “continued its leading edge efforts to elect

union members to political office,” according to the national AFL-CIO. Forty-two of 60 union member candidates on ballots in the state won their races, including four state assembly and three state senate seats. Those victories bring the total number of New Jersey union members holding local, county and state offices to nearly 400, said state AFL-CIO President Charles Wowkanek.

“Speaking in a united voice and working for a common goal, the labor movement solidified our movement as the strongest voter base in the state,” he said.

Virginia union members helped secure a strong 52-46 margin of victory for Lt. Gov. Tim Kaine in his winning campaign for governor. In a state that voted heavily for President Bush in 2000 and 2004, labor’s rallying cry helped turn the tide against far-right candidate Jerry Kilgore.

More than 400,000 members of Virginia union households were a deciding

factor in the result—as were 50,000 Virginians who joined the AFL-CIO’s affiliate Working America in the months before the election. In Northern Virginia alone, Working America volunteers reached some 600 to 800 voters a night in September and October.

Change to Win union federation Chair, Anna Burger praised workers in Change to Win unions for stepping up during the 2005 election. “We are heartened by this victory, but we know that our work is far from over,” Burger said. “Building on these results, we will continue our work to unite workers and give them a voice on their jobs and in their communities. And we will begin preparing for next year’s elections and beyond, continuing the cooperation that our unions shared during this past election with other unions and progressive allies at the state and local levels.”

# Strike Alert

## Support 4,400 Striking Northwest Airlines Employees

by Ray Rogers, Director Corporate Campaign Inc.

Forty-four hundred mechanics, custodians and cleaners, members of the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA), have been on strike against Northwest Airlines since August 20. They struck against NWA's demands that called for outsourcing 53% of their jobs (later increased to 77%) and massive wage, benefits and work-rule concessions for those remaining. Northwest now says it has hired enough mechanics and subcontractors to completely replace all 4,400 striking workers.

It should come as no surprise that Northwest's outrageous demands were being made by board members and executives who are enormously wealthy and very close to the Bush Administration. One of Northwest's top policymakers is former Michigan Governor John Engler, who is now president of the rabidly anti-union National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), founded by Pres. Bush's great

grandfather, Samuel Prescott Bush.

With Engler, Northwest is leading a new wave of union busting by using permanent replacements and the bankruptcy courts as tools to not only bust AMFA, but to bust every union on the Northwest property.



Northwest Director, NAM President & Union-Buster John Engler

The public should be aware that the outsourcing of mechanics' jobs undermines safety and security. A mechanic employed by Northwest must have a federal FAA license, a 10-year FBI security background check and is subject

to drug and alcohol testing. But outsourced mechanics, foreign or domestic, do not need to be licensed, nor have an FBI security check. Furthermore, outsourced mechanics employed by foreign facilities are not subject to drug or alcohol testing.

The result? Since the strike began, many Northwest planes have had trouble due to incompetent and lax maintenance personnel and oversight.

The entire labor movement must confront this new wave of union busting or face massive concessions leading to the loss of union jobs, pitiful wages, meager benefits and no pensions.

Tell John Engler and NAM that their primitive style of labor relations has no place in the 21st century and that Engler should resign from the Northwest board. Call him at: (800) 248-6626 or (202) 637-3000; or write him at: NAM, 1331 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20004; Fax (202) 637-3182; E-mail: [manufacturing@nam.org](mailto:manufacturing@nam.org).

# Retiree Corner

On Tuesday, Nov. 29th, Retirees Jack Denker and Jim Collins remembered it was the last Tuesday of the month, so they made a point of stopping in at the Learning Center. Jim had with him a great old photo from the 1960's. In it, he stands among a score of Lathers (including Dave Richardson and Pete McGovern) who have just finished working, on a volunteer basis, on a school for the handicapped in Commack, Long Island. Jim promises to get us a copy for our museum.

That's right. Our museum, showing the history of Local 46 through photos

and artifacts is developing nicely, and it is open to Retirees for viewing on the last Tuesday of the month. We know Christmas is in December, but why not give some thought to making the January meeting on the 31st? If you call a few days ahead of time at (718) 267-0468, Ext. 103 and let us know you're coming, we'll be able to provide some hospitality.

And just for the record, when asked what he thought about the small November turnout, Jack Denker said: "Hey where the h--- did everybody go?" Jim Collins consoled with: "Better days are coming." Why not prove Jim right and make Jack happy with a

visit in January?

And talk about feeling right at home! Look where recent retiree Mark Oleske found to live in his retirement. Good luck, Mark. At least you ought to be able to get along with your new neighbors.



These particular diamonds however, are the ones found in the lath that was recently installed at the newly constructed MTA bus terminal in Maspeth, Queens. The galvanized, paper backed, 2.5 diamond mesh lath was specified to receive spray-on fireproofing covering in excess of 1/2 million square feet of Q-decking and poured concrete.

Two-man crews, hoisting themselves with scissor lifts to reach the high arches and attach the lath to the Q-decking, used screw guns to drive #8x1/2" zinc, self-drilling screws. Where concrete had already been

poured, the method varied a bit with the gang using fuel celled "Trak-Fast" nail guns to do the job.

The primary reason for the increased levels of precaution and fire safety awareness is the presence of highly flammable materials inside the building. Whatever the reason for the need was, Local 46 Lathers were there to meet it. While all involved did an excellent job, special kudos are due to Foreman, Jim Blessington and Shop Steward, John Fernandez for insuring that both an aggressive production schedule and safe, dignified conditions were maintained.

### Got Comments or Announcements for the Editor?

Please call:  
718-267-0468

or write to:  
61-02 32nd Ave.,  
Woodside, NY 11377

## The Democratic Process at Work

On Saturday, November 5th, the rank and file of Local 46 turned out to elect their officers. The results are as follows:

**Business Manager/  
Financial Secretary**  
Bob Ledwith

**Manhattan/Staten Island  
Business Agent**  
Terry Moore

**Bronx/Westchester  
Business Agent**  
Fred LEMoine

**Brooklyn/Queens  
Business Agent**  
Kevin Kelly

**Nassau/Suffolk  
Business Agent**  
Ronnie Richardson

**President**  
John Coffey

**Vice-President**  
Brian Gibbons

**Recording Secretary**  
Paul Brown

**Sgt. at Arms**  
John McMurray

**Asst. Sgt. at Arms**  
Al Scott

**Executive Board**  
William Cuevas  
George Fernandez  
Frank Connelly  
James Gibbons  
Eduardo Rivera

**Trustees**  
Bob DeAngelis • Brian Maine



## Labor History

### 13 January 1874 - Cold Indeed

The original **Tompkins Square Riot**. As unemployed workers demonstrated in New York's Tompkins Square Park, a detachment of mounted police charged into the crowd, beating men, women and children indiscriminately with billy clubs and leaving hundreds of casualties in their wake.

Commented Abram Duryee, the Commissioner of Police: "It was the most glorious sight I ever saw . . ."

*New York Times, August 27, 1988:*

Jan. 13, 1874, a time of national financial distress. A group of unemployed workers had obtained a police permit for a mass rally in Tompkins Square to demand public aid for the jobless, and the Mayor had promised to speak. However, when the authorities learned that "radical agitators" were prominent in the sponsoring committee, the permit was cancelled with no notice.

A huge throng of working people and their families gathered, only to find themselves the target of sudden attack by a club-swinging squad of mounted police. Men, women and children were

ridden down as they fled in terror; dozens of bystanders also suffered injuries.

One youthful worker, who saved himself from a cracked skull by ducking into a cellarway, took the lesson of the Tompkins Square riot very much to heart. He was *Samuel Gompers*, a fledgling member of the Cigarmakers Union. Later, in his autobiography, Gompers showed how profoundly that experience influenced his decision to make an abhorrence of ideological entanglements a bedrock principle of the American Federation of Labor.

"I saw," he said, "how professions of radicalism and sensationalism concentrated all the forces of society against a labor movement and nullified in advance normal, necessary activity. I saw that leadership of the labor movement could be safely entrusted only to those into whose hearts and minds had been woven the experience of earning their bread by daily labor. I saw that betterment for workingmen must come primarily through workingmen."

LOCAL 46 METALLIC LATHERS UNION AND REINFORCING IRON WORKERS

# The Lather

1322 THIRD AVENUE @ EAST 76TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10021

*"Some men see things as they are and say why?"*

*I dream things that never were and say why not?"*

**LOCAL 46  
METALLIC LATHERS UNION AND  
REINFORCING IRON WORKERS**

1322 Third Avenue @ East 76th Street  
New York, NY 10021  
212-737-0500  
Fax: 212-249-1226

**METAL LATHERS TRUST,  
PENSION AND VACATION FUNDS**

260 East 78th Street  
New York, NY 10021  
212-535-2323  
Fax: 212-535-3203

**LOCAL 46 LEARNING CENTER**

61-02 32nd Avenue  
Woodside, NY 11377  
718-267-7500  
Fax: 718-267-8316



**We're on the web  
[www.ml46.org](http://www.ml46.org)**

*"The Injury of One is the Concern of All"*

