



AIR FREIGHT CHAUFFEURS, HANDLERS,
WAREHOUSEMEN, ALLIED WORKERS, MISCELLANEOUS,
PRODUCTION AND INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYEES

295 News

LOCAL 295 UPDATE – Your Local Union has been working on your behalf on many fronts

The *International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT)* was formed in 1903 by representatives of independent local unions across the United States of America who had the foresight to recognize that the ability of each local Union that provided assistance to its members could be better improved by the formation of a great labor organization that would pool its resources and talents from individual locals.

In the years that followed the IBT won great respect for its members through worker rights, better working conditions, better wages and benefits. The IBT's history includes the creation of the middle class. Its political influence was used to serve the interest of non union workers as well as its own members. Through good Teamster contracts and the IBT's political influence, laws were passed that helped raise the standard of living for all working Americans, both Union and non-Union. The then poor working class evolved into the American middle class. This was the answer to the American dream.

In November of 1955 the IBT certified Local 295 as an affiliate of this great Union. This local was created with the purpose to represent the best interest of air freight chauffeurs, handlers, warehouseman and allied workers. In the post WWII and the years that followed is when the air-freight business took off.

Local 295 grew to be a great and powerful local Union. Its membership grew and the member's wages and benefits grew as well. In 1970 Local 851 was granted a charter by the IBT. Local 851 was started by transferring Local 295 members into Local 851. They were mostly clerical workers in the airfreight industry and mostly employed by the same employers whose employees were covered by Local 295 contracts.

As time went on both locals were victimized by criminal activity that led to criminal investigations, convictions and exposed corruption. Both locals ended up in a government trusteeship that lasted a long time and cost the members and their respective locals millions of dollars. These trusteeships lasted for over 10 years. In the time of the trusteeship and the prior years' these locals lost respect and suffered the consequences of a decline in membership. This led to an insurgence of non union employers into the airport industry.

All this along with a failing economy has placed our Local Union in a difficult situation which affects all of our members as well as their employers. Both the members and the employers they work for compete against a non union employer who exploits their employees. A non union worker earns a lot less money, receives minimal or no benefits such as medical or pension, they are denied workers rights, overtime pay, sick pay, vacation, and the list goes on and on. They are denied all the negotiated benefits that members enjoy in a Union contract. The non union employers are able to undercut a Union employer's bid and charge much less because they exploit their employees by not paying them a living wage! Non Union employers get richer while their employees struggle to make ends meet.

We as union members/workers, our Union Employers and the non union workers in the airfreight industry have to recognize that this is an unfair situation and is a detriment to our Union and our industry. The situation is growing and left alone it will not get better.

Once we all recognize this, the sooner we can all do something about it. Collectively we can organize the unorganized. There is something we can all do even if staying out of the way is all you can do then please do that. Now is not the time to entertain ones individual agenda, rather now is the time to realize this crisis, and band together so we can deal with it.

Over the last 18 months we at the local level have had to deal with DHL's collapse which resulted in massive layoffs; over 3,000 between 295 and 851. This has truly proven to be a hardship on our members and it wreaked havoc to both locals. As organizations we had to downsize our staffs, cut salaries, etc. We were able to do this without affecting our ability to represent our members and their needs (grievances, negotiations and Arbitrations).

In 2008 DHL Express, the largest employer that our local Union has a contract with made a business decision to exit the US marketplace as a domestic carrier. Thousands of members were laid off and over a dozen stations were closed down completely from July 2008 until March 2010. The Union was able to protect its members being laid off and the remaining members by insuring all layoffs were being done by master seniority and not by the employers' choice and not by any other means. The Union was also able to negotiate generous severance packages that included payouts, continued pension contributions and extended medical coverage for the thousands of members. All these benefits were not just handed over by the employer. Our Executive Board members spent an enormous amount of time negotiating these additional benefits. They handled the negotiations, thousands of member's phone calls as well as visits to the many locations during this time. While all this was going on there were still other contracts with other employers that needed to be negotiated. These contracts were negotiated with the other employers. These negotiations took place in the most difficult of times, but due to the experience and tireless efforts of our Executive Board, Business Agents, Stewards and members they were all ratified by an overwhelming majority.

If this wasn't enough the Union Trustees of both local 295 and 851 were forced to deal with new legislation that was passed specifically the "Pension Protection Act" (PPA). This could not have come at a worse time. Our great Country was dealing with the greatest economic crash since the depression in 1929. Despite a global economic meltdown, the collapse of Wall Street, the largest contributing employer of the Pension fund laying off thousands of members causing a massive loss of contributions to the pension fund, we were able to avoid a total disaster caused by this "perfect storm". Through tough negotiations the Union Trustees of Local's 295 & 851 were able to negotiate a one hundred million dollar **(\$100,000,000.00)** infusion of money into

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LOCAL 295 UPDATE

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our pension fund from DHL Express. This and the hardship of benefit changes is what saved our pension fund from default status. This would have meant disaster to our members, resulting in no early retirement benefit and the possibility of an insolvent fund affecting not only the current members but the retired ones as well. At that point the pension fund would have been turned over to the pension benefit guarantee corp. (PBGC) where the maximum allowed accrual would be \$35.75 a month for every year of service. This would include those who are already retired and receiving a pension. They would have been reduced to that level.

Increased contributions rates were negotiated to the pension fund to meet the funding needs going forward. We were able to keep those contributions in line in an effort not to further the possible hardship this could have meant by imposing an unattainable contribution rate for the pension fund which may have forced employers to withdraw from the fund and possibly close their doors because they simply could not afford it. We were able to salvage some early retirement benefits by adopting a rehabilitation plan that should deliver our pension fund out of the red zone (critical status). Tough decisions were made, but they were made with the members and retirees future in mind. The ultimate goal was to insure the current retirees continue to receive a pension and that the current members receive a pension benefit that will be there for their retirement as well. Our Pension fund was truly lucky that it did not suffer the losses that other funds across the USA did because of prudent investment decisions and diversity of the investments by our Trustees prior to the collapse. There are pension funds across the USA that lost upwards of 50% of their assets and most probably will be deemed insolvent. That was not the case for our pension fund thanks to the trustees who made decisions that limited our losses. Because the trustees adopted a rehabilitation plan the fund avoided default status. The default status would have come with a hefty price tag of unattainable contributions by the employers as well as lower accrual rates for the members.

With a rehabilitation plan in effect the goal is that the fund emerges from the red zone (critical status) and then the Trustees will look at a new plan of benefits that may raise the accrual rates, add in more early retirement benefits, etc. This cannot be done with haste. The trustees will continue to seek the advice of professionals and make decisions that protect the retirement benefits of all the participants. This is what was done and this is what will continue to be done. The goal is to protect all the participants and have them receive the maximum benefit without putting the pension fund in jeopardy.

As if the plate was not full already, and as the pension crisis continued, we also had to deal with our medical funding issues. With out of control medical cost increases threatening all Americans today we struggle to protect our Union medical fund. Every dollar is watched closely and tough decisions are made to do whatever we need to control cost and still have the fund provide the extensive level of benefits it does to the participants. We have negotiated further increases to the medical fund with employers to insure our members continue to receive health care coverage they are accustomed to. We are constantly reminded by the employers that most people today contribute personally for their medical coverage. Our active members in the Local 295/851 Health and welfare fund do not!

As the plate started to overflow there was still more work to be done. The Executive Boards of both locals realized the economical, logistical and historical sense and with honor, dedication and obligation to the members came to a decision to merge local 851 into local 295. All options were looked at to insure the best for the members of both locals prior to this merger. There were many other locals that were interested in a merger. We believe they were interested for selfish reasons and not for the best interest of the members. With all that was happening across the USA with pension funds, others looked at our fund and realized that with a negotiated amount of 100 million dollars infused into it and a rehabilitation plan already adopted to get the fund out of critical status, they would want to get their hands on our fund. After looking at all the aspects of a merger, discussing this with the members of both locals and ratification by the members of Local 851 on February 1, 2010 we have all become proud 295 members. With that we have the honor and pleasure of welcoming the Local 851 members back home to Local 295. Although it has taken many man hours of the staff of Local 295 this merger was thought through and is being done seamlessly.

This last 18 months has been a very tough time for all of us in many ways. We continue to see the tough times the whole world is experiencing but we are excited to start a new beginning and build our Local Union back brick by brick. The members of Local 295 have consistently met the challenges of the past with a true eye to recognize a problem, the courage to face that problem, the common sense to solve the problem and the wisdom to know the difference between what things can't be changed and what things should be changed. Only together will we achieve Victory through Unity!

A review of our Union and what your elected officials have been working on:

- Serving the members: grievances, hearings and arbitrations
- DHL exits the market of domestic shipments within the USA
- Company shutdowns and thousands of layoffs
- Negotiated the largest severance packages in our Local's history
- The crash of Wall Street, Bank failures and the mortgage crisis
- US economy is the worst it has been since the great depression
- The attack on our Pension plans
- The attack on our Health Care plans
- Negotiating Contracts in the worst of economic times (DHL Express, JRS, etc...)
- Running the local with a shrinking budget
- Merging of Local's 295 & 851
- Organizing
- Building at 33 West Hawthorne Ave
- Scholarship Fund



President's View

"These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country."

Thomas Paine

In November 1955 Local 295 was certified as an affiliate of the greatest Union of our times. The *International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT)*. Since then Local 295, Local 851 and the IBT have had some hell of a ride in all that has gone on during the last 55 years. In spite of it all we have made it through and have a lot to be happy and proud of. As I have stated many times in the past and continue to say today I am just as proud of being a member of Teamsters Local 295 as I am of my family and my Country.

I tend to look at them the same way. Sure things can go wrong and times can get tough, but that is the time we get busy fixing them.

I enjoy seeking out the facts of history, arriving at a destination that contains the true answers rather than someone else's spin or a group's rewrite of history. That's how I can set my path by knowing my internal compass is pointing to the true north. That will insure that I stay on the right path no matter if the path takes me uphill or downhill or if it is made up of twists and turns. I know I will not be alone on this path knowing I am a member of this great local knowing I have my brothers and sisters with me heading in the same direction. We will not let anything or anyone get in our way. That way is the way of Teamster Unionism! It is because of the principles of Unionism that our Union has had the power and ability to deliver workers rights, job security, a good wage, medical care and a pension to all of us in this great Union.

The merger of Local 851 into Local 295 will only prove great results. I am excited about our new beginning as one stronger local. I would like to welcome Vice President Thom Conelias as well as all of the former Local 851 members into Local 295. Thom brings many years of experience not only running a Local Union but over 10 years of experience as a Trustee to our Pension and Health and Welfare funds. Together we will work as one strong team to meet the challenges of the future.

"These are the times that try men's souls". We have challenges ahead. Local 295 has withstood big setbacks and none have destroyed us. This local as an institution must endure and must not perish. It must exist to serve the best interest of its active members, retired members and future members. Without the tireless efforts of the Executive Board, Business Agents, Stewards and the support of the members I could not look forward to achieve this goal.

Stand with me and together we will meet the challenges that come before us and achieve victory through unity. I thank all of you for doing your part.

Fraternally,

Lou Calemine
President

Moving?

If you change your address, it is very important to let the union and funds' offices know. Please call the office as soon as possible to make sure we have the correct contact information for you, so benefit and other important information can reach you.

TEAMSTERS LOCAL UNION 295

AIR FREIGHT CHAUFFEURS, HANDLERS,
WAREHOUSEMEN, ALLIED WORKERS, MISCELLANEOUS,
PRODUCTION AND INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYEES

Executive Board

Lou Calemine, President
Thomas N. Conelias, Vice President
Jack J. Ruggiero, Secretary, Treasurer
Vinny Bruno, Recording Secretary

Billy Robertson, Trustee
Eddie McCormick, Trustee
Ignacio Garcia, Trustee



Dear Sister and Brother Members,

I am so proud to be a Teamster for over 24 years! I began my career with Airborne Express in 1986. Over the years I have worn a variety of hats. I started out delivering packages, worked all aspects of clerical jobs as an agent, I was a lead Agent and a dispatcher prior to being elected as an officer of Local 851 almost 10 years ago. I am truly understanding of the hard work the members do on a daily basis.

My reasons for wanting a position as an officer of the Local Union was to be able to make a difference in the members lives. I wanted to work hard to see that the hard work the members do everyday is rewarded through a strong contract and that our pension and medical funds remain solvent and are available when we all retire.

My job is as challenging today as it was 10 years ago, but I know the members are in a better place today because of the hard work of the people I work with and the strength and Unity of the membership. Yes we have had our bumps in the road, but those bumps are what make us stronger. I have taken an active role in our pension and health funds and am ready to meet the challenges brought before us. I believe the merger between Locals' 295 & 851 was the best thing for the membership. It has put the best of the best together as one strong United force!

I am proud to be a member of the Team at Local 295. President Lou Calemine, the entire Executive Board and the members of Local 295 have welcomed me and all the former Local 851 members with open arms. For that I thank you!

As Vice President of this great Local I assure you we will continue to work with one common goal in mind- the betterment of the membership and their families. I look forward to working with all the 295 members. My door is always open and my phone is always on the hook. Let's move forward.....TOGETHER!

Fraternally,
Thomas N. Conelias



Useful Websites:

www.teamster.org

www.fedexdriversarentpilots.com

www.teamsterslocal295.org

www.fmcsa.dot.gov

www.dol.gov

Get a Withdrawal Card When You Leave Your Job

Be sure to request a withdrawal card within 90 days from when you are laid off, called to active duty, terminated, retire, go on disability or leave the craft. The charge for the withdrawal card is \$.50. All initiation fees and back dues must be up to date before the withdrawal card is issued. Mail or bring in the form below to the Local 295 office along with your check or money order for \$0.50. It is your responsibility to obtain a withdrawal card. Failure to obtain a withdrawal card might obligate you to pay extra dues and re-initiation fees.

Withdrawal Card Request Form

Name: _____

Social Security No.: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Last Day of Work: _____

Name of Employer: _____

Reason for Leaving: _____
(Quit, Laid Off, Terminated, etc.)

Signature: _____

Date: _____