



Published by TWU Local 100

# Transport Workers

**BULLETIN**

Fall 2014 • Vol. 5 • No. 2



## Union Stands With Cuomo-Hochul

Local 100 President John Samuelsen with Governor Cuomo, Kathy Hochul, candidate for Lieutenant Governor and Iowa Senator Tom Harkin.

See page 7.

**CUOMO  
HOCHUL**

## Mass Turn Out for Membership Meeting

Secretary-Treasurer Earl Phillips waves to membership assembly.

See pages 8 & 9.







## As I Was Saying

JOHN SAMUELSEN, PRESIDENT

# A Year of Accomplishment

THE YEAR IS FAR FROM OVER. BUT BY ALL MEASURING STICKS, 2014 has been a year of accomplishment for Local 100.

We achieved a new five-year contract with the MTA covering 34,000 TA and OA members. The contract provided raises in every year, full retroactivity, and a package of benefits worth more than \$635 million to our members and their families.

Earlier this year, we committed unprecedented new resources to our School Bus Division in Westchester. We opened a new satellite office in Yonkers to service these members, and we worked relentlessly to settle contracts. As a result, we now have current contracts covering all of our school bus properties for the first time in a decade.

We have had one of our most successful campaigns in years in Albany with the passage of three major bills directly impacting transit workers, and our primary day get-out-the-vote activities yielded wins in all of our most hotly contested targeted races.

Secretary Treasurer Earl Phillips has done an exemplary job in handling the union's finances.

We recently organized two major properties, including New York City Bikeshare with 250 workers and Global Contact Services (GCS) with 550 workers who handle the call center for the MTA's Access-a-Ride program. We are involved in several other drives as well to bring the fighting spirit of Local 100 to unorganized workers throughout the region.

I firmly believe that if it moves in New York, and the

work is unorganized, then we in Local 100 will make every effort to bring that work under the TWU Local 100 banner.

The work for the year is not done. We are in the middle of a campaign for an improved pension for our MTA Bus members, as part of an overall new contract. We are working with multiple entities, including the City Council, the Mayor's Office, the Governor's office and the MTA to win contract fairness for these members.

Overall, I believe our program to rebuild the Local is working.

We have a great team of Local 100 staff working with our officers who, together, are turning our vision of a revitalized, powerful TWU Local 100 into a reality. I'm very proud of them all and they job they are doing. But none of this would have been possible without you, our members. You'll recall that less than two years ago, transit workers were viewed in the media as overpaid public employees delivering an important service. Then, within 48 hours after Superstorm Sandy hit, we were seen by all as an essential workforce delivering the region's most vital service – mobility.

After Sandy even our most ardent critics had changed their tunes. One from the New York Post of all places called our performance during and after Sandy "a game-changer."

I believe our union is in a good place. Thanks to you, we are a more unified force today than at any time in years, and as such, stronger and more able to win for our families.

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## BULLETIN

**8-9**

### Mass Membership Meeting Draws 1,200

*Members stand for a moment of silence before the start of the 2014 Mass Membership Meeting, which featured special presentations on the new dental and vision plans for TA and OA members.*



**15**

### Bikeshare Workers Are Now TWU

*Workers at the City's newest transportation industry, Citibike, more commonly known as Bikeshare, are now members of TWU Local 100.*



**20-23**

### 6,000 Enjoy Family Day 2014

*Beautiful weather greeted TWU families at the union's Family Day Event at Coney Island. This year's gathering approached, if not surpassed, last year's record turnout.*



**35**

### Union Turns Out at African American Day Parade

*The union's top four officers turned out for this year's African American Day parade on September 21, 2014. The union contingent was an impressive sight, with a phalanx of motorcyclists, a TWU float and the vintage 5th Avenue Coach bus leading the way.*



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James Gannons

# A Comparison of the Major New Contracts

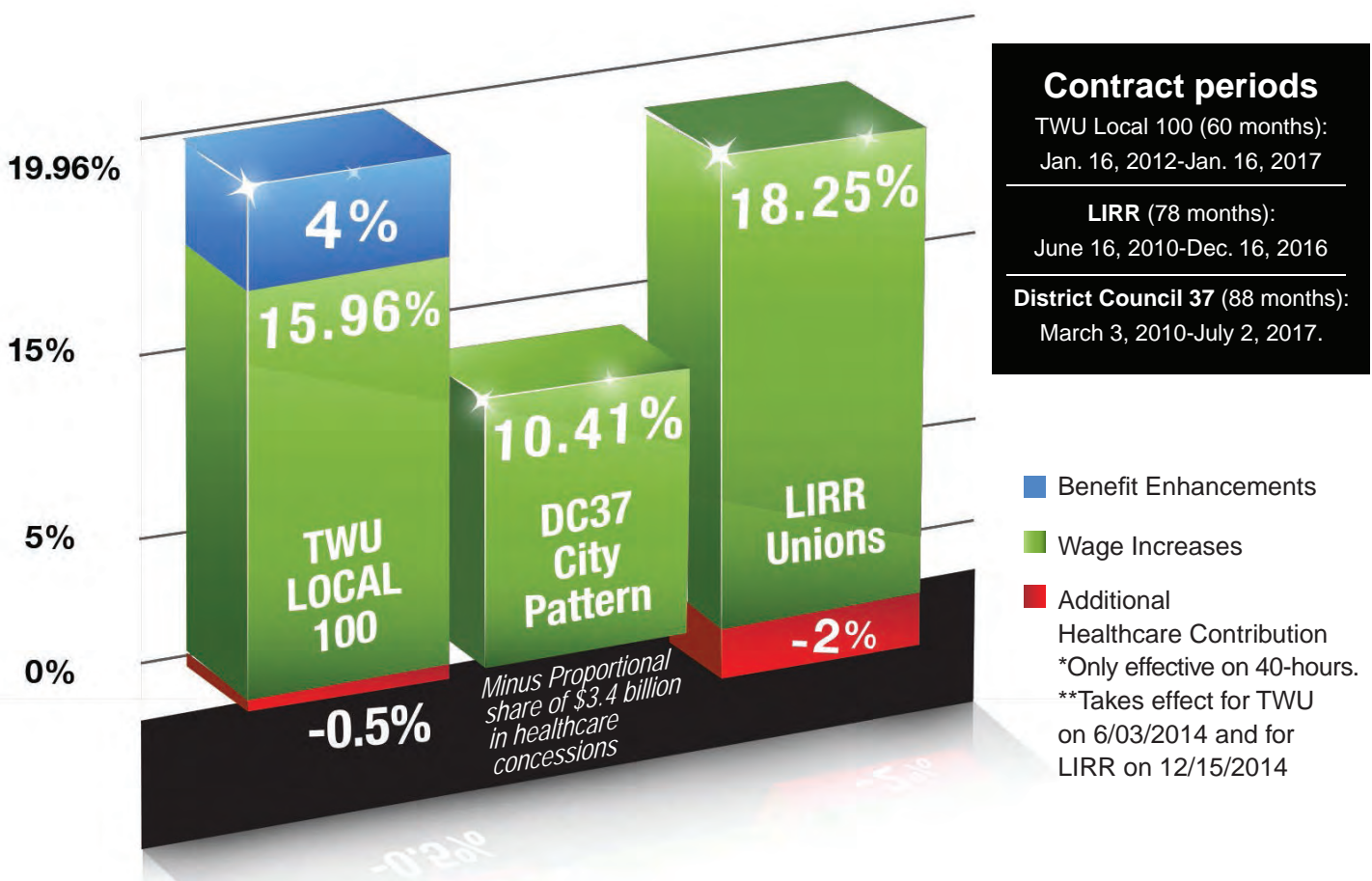
## TWU Local 100 • District Council 37 (NYC Pattern) • LIRR Labor Coalition

Starting with the new TWU Local 100 contract with the MTA last April, there have been several other major collective bargaining agreements reached between the City and several big City Unions (most notably DC 37 with 125,000 members), and the LIRR labor coalition and the MTA.

The DC 37 agreement established a new City pattern for collective bargaining — a pattern that we in Local 100 would have been tied to in binding arbitration had we not achieved our settlement with the MTA beforehand. Also, the comparison shown here takes into account that both the City agreements and the LIRR Labor Coalition agreement cover time periods (2010 and 2011) in which we already received raises from our previous agreement. **In other words, their contracts straddle both our new contract and our previous contract.**

The graphic below takes into account the full economic value of the agreements when both wages and benefits are added in.

### How contracts stack up in overall economical value



### Benefit Improvements

**TWU:** \$100 million in new health care and non-wage benefits (equal to 4 wage points according to MTA). Agreed to additional 0.5% payroll deduction on 40 hours per week.

**DC 37:** No benefit improvements. Agreed to proportional share of \$3.4 billion in health care cost reductions with other municipal labor coalition unions.

**LIRR:** No benefit improvements. Agreed to a 2 percent payroll deduction on 40 hours per week.



# ***Paid Maternity and Paternity Leave an Important New Benefit*** **Family Friendly Contract Has Some New Fans**

SIGNAL MAINTAINER JOSLYN DORIS FELT LIKE HE had hit the lottery twice in one day.

First, his wife, Naima, gave birth to his second daughter, Milania – healthy and beautiful – on May 21, 2014. Second, May 21, 2014 also happened to be the first day under the new contract with the MTA that members became eligible for two weeks paid maternity and paternity pay on the birth or adoption of a child.

The former track star from South Shore High in Canarsie and SUNY Delhi in Upstate New York, said his wife “was ecstatic” when he told her he’d be home with her for two weeks. “She said, ‘you mean you get two weeks off, and get paid, wow,’” recalls Joslyn. “I wish we’d had this benefit when my first daughter was born.”

Joslyn, who emigrated to the U.S. with his family from Guyana in 1989 has been with the MTA as a Signal Maintainer since 2005. His speed on the track (he once ran the 400 in 48 seconds flat) got him a partial scholarship to Delhi where he took up electrical studies. “Now I just run after the kids,” he said.

When asked about being the first Local 100 member to enjoy the benefit, he laughed and said, “we made it by the skin of our teeth.”

Another TWU dad who has taken advantage of the new family-friendly contract is Station Agent Nazmul Hoda. He came to America from Bangladesh in 1990 at the age of 6, and grew up in Riverdale. His father ran the family’s fruit and vegetable store in Manhattan. He attended Roosevelt High School in Manhattan and, like many, took the Station Agent exam on a lark.

He enrolled in college as a pre-med student, worked in a pharmacy, and studied mechanical engineering, but then was unexpectedly called by transit and offered the job, which



**Alex D’Costa with wife Connie, newborn Aaron, and Anthony.**

**Local 100 Station Agent Nazmul Hoda, wife, Ruqsana, daughter, Tanaz, and his newborn baby, Shahadat.**

**Signal Maintainer Joslyn Doris with wife, Naima, four-year old daughter, Janai and new daughter, Milania.**



he accepted in 2007. The new contract provision for a two-week leave came in handy in August, when Nazmul and his wife Ruqsana had their second child, Shahadat.

A third TWU dad, Alex D’Costa, 30, was hired by Transit as a Station Agent on July 21. His second child, Aaron, was born on August 31, a little more than a month later. A former Manager at Target, Alex was thrilled with the Local 100 paternity leave benefit, as was his wife, Connie, a Teacher. “This is amazing. I don’t know what I would have done without it. The first week you have to go back to the hospital every couple of days, have doctor’s appointments. My wife really appreciated

it that I could help.”

The leave came in especially handy because Alex is assigned to work extra, meaning his schedule wasn’t regular and that meant his wife couldn’t count on him being there when she needed him.

# VICTORY FOR FAMILY, UNION

## Felony Murder Charges Upheld in Death of William Pena

DESPITE EFFORTS BY DEFENSE ATTORNEY HARVEY SLOVIS TO PAINT HIS client, Dominic Whilby, as a sympathetic figure, a Manhattan criminal court judge has refused to drop the two most serious charges – depraved indifference and felony murder – in the death of TWU Local 100 Bus Operator William Pena.

Slovis's defeated motion to throw out the top two charges hinged on intent, which requires the perpetrator to have an understanding of the damage his actions could cause. Whilby was drunk when he crashed a stolen truck at high speed into Pena's M14 bus at 5:30 AM on February 12, 2014.

Whilby had been partying with his uncle, model Tyson Beckford, Australian model Shanina Shaik, and Paris Hilton at 1 Oak in the West Village in Manhattan. He was thrown out of the party, fell asleep briefly, talked with the night manager at the Dream Hotel, where he reportedly was expecting to get picked up by a limo, and then stole the truck that became the instrument that took William Pena's life.

Attorney Slovis said that Whilby, who was inarticulate for a short time after the crash, didn't know what he was doing.

Judge Gregory Carro, announcing his decision on July 14 to a courtroom packed with Local 100 Bus Operators and union officials, disagreed. Handing a victory to the Pena family, union supporters and attorney Sanford Rubenstein, Carro ticked off key actions taken by Whilby be-

fore he hit the bus – that pointed to the young man's ability to think clearly enough to make rational decisions.

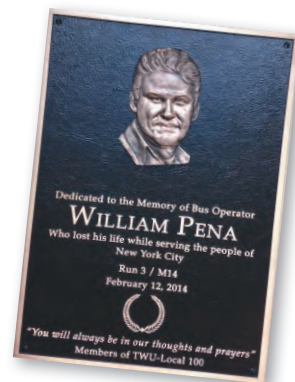
First, Carro noted, Whilby was able to converse with the manager of the Dream Hotel before he stole the bakery truck that he turned into a murder weapon. Second, on stealing the truck he had to extricate it from a tight spot, and then he locked the door to the truck to prevent anyone stopping the theft. Again, the operations of a rational mind. Third, Whilby swerved around a car waiting for a red light before slumming into the City bus sending Pena hurtling out the window to his death.

From these facts, the Judge said, the grand jury that indicted Whilby "could rationally have inferred that the collision with the 58,000 pound bus caused [Whilby's] inability to speak immediately after the accident, not his intoxication, and that he displayed depraved indifference to human life, making no attempt to avoid vehicles, driving in violation of the traffic law with utter disregard of any person [in his path.]"

Carro further reasoned that the shouts of hotel employees when Whilby stole the bakery truck and his action in locking it "put him on notice that his acts were egregious. The Court," Carro concluded, "finds that there was a rational basis to his actions and that the defendant's mens rea motion to dismiss is denied." Mens rea is the legal term for conscious culpability, or knowledge that the act you are committing is criminal.

For Pena's wife, Nancy, the court hearing brought justice a little bit closer for her and teenage daughter Gabriella.

"I want Whilby to get the maximum sentence for what he did," she told the news media outside the courthouse. "Our lives have changed forever and [Willie's] life has a price."



*This plaque hangs on the wall in the recently renamed William Pena Swingroom at Quill Depot.*



*Union officers and supporters, including Secretary Treasurer Earl Phillips, Recording Secretary LaTonya Crisp-Sauray and Vice President JP Patafio, join Pena's wife, Nancy, daughter, Gabrielle, and family attorney Sanford Rubenstein outside Manhattan court on July 14. The family and union are demanding that Pena's killer be tried for felony murder.*



## Union Endorses Second Term for Gov. Andrew Cuomo

The TWU Local 100 Executive Board has voted to throw the union's weight behind the re-election campaign of Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

TWU joins the Working Families Party, the NYS Building Trades Council, the Hotel and Motel Trades Council, 1199, and the New York Daily News in pushing for a second Cuomo term. The Executive Board also endorsed Kathy Hochul for Lieutenant Governor.

Local 100 President John Samuelsen recommended that the Board endorse Cuomo on the strength of the Governor's record of support for mass transit. Samuelsen said that Cuomo's help in breaking the contract impasse between the union and the MTA that resulted in the new five-year agreement covering TA and OA members also played a big role in tipping the scales to the Governor.

Cuomo's administration asserts that it has been extremely transit friendly during the past four years. This year's state budget includes \$4.7 billion to support operations of public transportation systems statewide, and more than \$20 billion over the past four budget cycles.

Cuomo was very aggressive in fighting for \$5 billion in federal funds to help rebuild devastated portions of MTA infrastructure in the wake of Hurricane Sandy in late 2012. The recently completed rehab of the Greenpoint Tunnel, done 100 percent with in-house TWU labor, is one the projects paid for with federal Sandy money. The Cuomo administration boasts that the post Sandy work is the

"largest reconstruction of the state's transit systems in 110 years."

Samuelsen also gave Cuomo high marks for implementing a series of reforms at the MTA to improve safety throughout its operation. Cuomo created the position of Chief Safety Officer, enacted management changes at the operating agencies to enhance and streamline safety functions, and created a Safety Committee of the MTA Board.

Cuomo also issued the MTA marching orders to implement a TWU-inspired program to give passengers or other citizens cash rewards for providing police with information leading to the arrest of individuals who assault a transit worker. The program is known as 'Transit Watch.'

President Samuelsen also lauded the Governor for his genuine appreciation of the job transit workers do day in and day out. The Governor was particularly complimentary of transit workers for their role in bringing the system back to life after Sandy. Cuomo said, at the press conference announcing the new contract with the MTA, that transit workers "are the epitome of great public servants. What they did during Hurricane Sandy I watched first hand under truly difficult circumstances. And they were there, day after day after day, day in and day out, dealing with things no one had ever seen before. You never saw a flooding of tunnels before, you never saw flooding of subway systems before, the way we saw it. And the transit workers were really magnificent."



**Gov. Cuomo greets Local 100 President John Samuelsen at the Labor Day parade on Sept. 6, 2014.**



**Gov. Cuomo and President John Samuelsen shake at presser announcing the union's new contract with the MTA last April.**

# Members Flock to Javits for An

MORE THAN 1,200 TWU LOCAL 100 RANK AND FILE members came to the Jacob Javits Center for the 2014 mass membership meeting to hear President John Samuelson and Secretary-Treasurer Earl Phillips give reports on the state-of-the-union.

Representatives of the union's new dental provider, Healthplex, and vision plan provider, GVS, gave special presentations on the dramatically improved benefits available to TA and OA members as a result of the recently ratified contract with the MTA.

Education Director Nick Bedell hosted a shop stewards forum to detail upcoming public campaigns.

Political Action Department Director Marvin Holland reported on the union's successful legislative year in Albany, highlighted by the passage of three major bills, including the



**Secretary Treasurer Earl Phillips gives financial report.**

Transit Authority Safety and Security Act, the Military Buy Back Bill and the Bus Partitions Bill. All three await Gov. Cuomo's signature. He also reported on the union's big wins on Primary Day among Local 100's endorsed candidates in hotly contested races for the State Assembly and Senate. Members heard, via video, from four of those candidates, including Brooklyn's Jesse Hamilton, Latoya Joyner, Latrice Walker, and Rodneyse Bichotte, all of whom thanked Local 100 for its support.

The members heard good financial news from Secretary-Treasurer Earl Phillips, who reported that Local 100 has brought nine thousand members into good standing since the beginning of the Samuelson administration in January of



**Representative from M3 Technology draws scholarship winners as Theresa Green (left) and Shannon Poland assist.**



**Station Division members and officers get together for quick shot.**



# Annual Mass Membership Meeting



*Members stand for a moment of silence at September 13th membership assembly.*

2010. He also reported that he expected another spike in the good-standing members ranks as a result of the Double Dues program, which allows a member to pay double dues over a period of months until arrears are paid. More than 1,800 members have signed up for the program. Phillips also reported that the Local's Widows and Orphans Fund, funded by member contributions, has raised the level of support for the education of children of those who have died in the line of duty to \$10,000 per eligible child per year, up from only \$750.00 in 2009.

President Samuelson gave a complete report on the Local's activities, highlighted by a description of the contract campaign with the MTA. He also reported on what he labeled his administration's "number one priority," the fight for a contract and pension improvements for MTA Bus members. Samuelson also reported on the union's aggressive new program to organize non-union properties, telling the rank-and-file that "if it moves in New York City, it's our work."

The 25 winners of the 2014 TWU Local 100/M3 Technology Scholarship program were announced during a random drawing in the middle of the meeting. A big screen TV raffle, courtesy of Fusco & Fusco, was won by Train Operator Cesar Miranda. And the Women's Committee 50-50 drawing was won by CED member Robin Poindexter.



*Women's Committee members Liz Wilson and Norma Lopez with 50-50 winner Robin Poindexter, Local 100 President Samuelson, and Recording Secretary LaTonya Crisp-Sauray (left).*



*President Samuelson (left) addresses shop stewards assembly as Education Director Nick Bedell looks on.*



# Greenpoint Tunnel Rehab Showcases Workers' Efforts

Rank and file members from all of the MOW divisions got some well-deserved recognition and a hot breakfast from New York City Transit on September 3. Flaggers and work train operators were also recognized. The occasion: on schedule and on-budget restoration of the Greenpoint Tubes in the tunnel connecting G line service from Brooklyn to Queens under Newtown Creek.

Speaking to a crowd of about a hundred members on the Brooklyn side of the tunnel, MOW Vice President Tony Utano saluted their efforts and noted that the work they accomplished during the just-ended five-week shutdown of the tubes was proof that New York City transit's own workforce is superior to contractors.

"Our members have the skills, our members have the experience, and our members know the system in a way no outside contractor could. Working together, we can bring projects in on time and under budget – and we don't cut corners to do it," he said. "Your success makes it easy for me, when I'm arguing for work to stay in house. I can say, we did it here, and we can do it there."

Utano followed NYCT Subways chief Joe Leader, who also had good things to say about our members' efforts. The breakfast program and the MTA's press release described, line by line, the work that was done by Lighting, Signals, EMD, Infrastruc-



**Transit brass present commemorative placards to Local 100 MOW Vice President Tony Utano (center).**

ture, RTO, Stations, Third Rail, and Track. Every union member who stepped up to have breakfast also received an embroidered "G line" baseball cap.

Local 100 hopes this is a sign of improved labor/management cooperation, where recognition is given for in-house work done on major projects and renovations.

The repairs to the G were made under the MTA's "Fix and Fortify" resiliency program, funded by an infusion of \$3.8 billion to the Authority in federal dollars after the devastating hit the system took in October of 2012 from Hurricane Sandy. It is paying for repairs system-wide as well as "hardening" that will help in the event of future floods.

While train service was suspended, the Department of Buses, staffed by TWU members, operated a shuttle service that ferried thousands of customers daily between Long Island City and Greenpoint.

"The timely resumption of G service and the infrastructure repairs completed during the shutdown is a testament to our team's hard work," said Leader. "I thank each and every one of the hundreds of employees who worked so hard over the past five weeks to get the job done."



**Vice President Tony Utano (center) and Track Chair Paul Navarro (right) exchange pleasantries with MTA officials, including Sr. Vice President, Department of Subways' Joe Leader (left).**



**TWU Local 100 members, along with Secretary Treasurer Earl Phillips, Vice President Tony Utano, and LES Chair John Chiarello, gather for a congratulatory photo.**





*Local 100 members  
working on the  
Greenpoint tube rehab.*





# TWU Shines at L

SCORES OF LOCAL 100 MEMBERS WERE JOINED by members of other TWU area Locals for a spirited march up 5th Ave. in this year's Labor Day Parade on Saturday, September 6, 2014.

The TWU contingent was an impressive sight for parade watchers as they were joined in the march by the TWU International bus, a vintage 5th Avenue Coach bus, a Grey Line Tour Bus, a cluster of Local 100 motorcyclists, and a group of TWU's newest members from New York City Bikeshare.

The parade also served as a political showcase for Gov. Andrew Cuomo and his running mate for Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul. New York State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli

also marched, as did Mayor de Blasio, Public Advocate Tish James and a host of other political leaders.

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), possibly labor's strongest supporter in the U.S. Senate, served as an honorary parade marshal.

Gov. Cuomo warmly greeted Local 100 President John Samuels, Secretary Treasurer Earl Phillips, MOW Vice President Tony Utano, LES Chair John Chiarello and MaB-STOA Division 1 chair Richard Davis. TWU International Vice President Jerome Lafragola also attended.

New York City Central Labor Council President Vincent Alvarez and New York State AFL-CIO President Mario Cilento led labor's brigade up Fifth Avenue.



Some of TWU's newest members from New York City Bikeshare joined the marchers.



President Samuels with Queens Borough President Melinda Katz.





# Labor Day Parade



Marchers gather in front of the TWU International bus.



Secretary Treasurer Earl Phillips offers union greetings in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral.



With Gov. Cuomo, from left are, LES Chair John Chiarello, VP Tony Utano, Secretary Treasurer Earl Phillips, OA Div. 1 Chair Richard Davis (partially obscured) and TWU International Vice President Jerome Lafragola.



State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli (left) with President Samuelson, VP Tony Utano, TWU Int'l Vice President Jerome Lafragola, and Int'l rep Curtis Tate.







*Public Advocate Tish James urges GCS worker to vote TWU. Local 100 rep. Frank McCann is at right.*

# TWU's Scores Landslide Organizing Win at MTA Para Transit Call Center

A FULL COURT PRESS BY LOCAL 100 ORGANIZERS and staff has brought 550 workers employed by GCS, a private company operating the MTA's Access-a-Ride call center, into the union's ranks.

Votes in the election, which pitted Local 100 against two other unions and a "No Union" campaign financed by the North Carolina-based employer, GCS, were tallied in the NLRB-run election on Sunday, September 14, 2014.

The landslide tally was: 331 for TWU Local 100; 91 for no union; 19 for Local 621 of the unaffiliated United Workers of America, and 8 for Local 322 of the same United Workers of America organization.

Local 100 President John Samuelson immediately congratulated the GCS workers, and welcomed them into "the strongest transportation union in New York, and across the country." He urged the newest TWU members them to "get involved your union. Don't sit on the sidelines. Together, we can do great things."

Samuelson heaped praise on the union's staff for a "24/7 effort over a three week period" to convince the workers that TWU was the right choice in the election. He also thanked Public Advocate Tish James and State Sen. Jose Peralta, who joined TWU organizers in urging GCS workers to vote TWU.

The employer, Global Contact Services (GCS), is headquartered in Salisbury, NC about 50 miles north of Charlotte. GCS President and CEO Greg Alcorn touts his company's success at keeping GCS a union-free company. Alcorn

***"GET INVOLVED IN YOUR UNION.  
DON'T SIT ON THE SIDELINES.  
TOGETHER, WE CAN  
DO GREAT THINGS."***

*- John Samuelson,  
President, Local 100*

jetted in to New York in the days before the election to urge his workers to reject unionization.

TWU countered with literature declaring that "\$11.00 an hour may be a living wage in North Carolina, but it's not a living wage in New York City."

The union also emphasized that the workers perform a vital service to New York's disabled and elderly communities, the main users of Access-a-Ride services, and that they are not being compensated properly for this work.

GCS initially won the work two years ago when the MTA decided to put the contract out for bid. The former contractor, First Transit, had been a TWU-contracted employer. However, GCS refused to recognize the union and, as well, refused to hire the vast majority of the workers previously with First Transit.

"This is a huge win for TWU Local 100," concluded Samuelson. "Our Organizing Department has firmly established itself, and we look forward to the challenges coming our way. We will continue to grow TWU Local 100."



# TWU Welcomes Bikeshare Workers to the Union Family

TWU LOCAL 100 IS NOW THE exclusive bargaining representative of New York City Bikeshare workers, after an agreement was signed on September 16, 2014. TWU becomes the first to unionize the growing bikeshare industry across the US, with plans to organize workers in other cities as well.

TWU Local 100 President John Samuels called bikeshare “uncharted territory” for unions, and said that organizing committees are forming to unionize additional bikeshare workers.

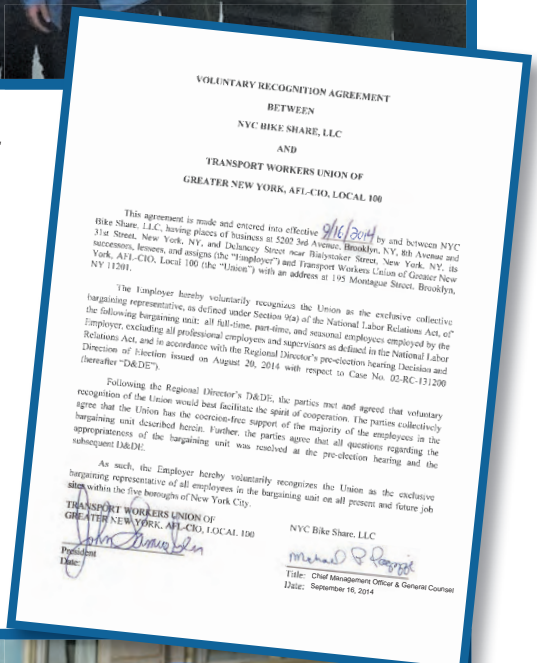
Local 100 views bikeshare workers as part of the urban transportation system, bringing mobility, healthy exercise, and environmental responsibility to the mix. Prior to the signing of the agreement, Local 100 had waged an organizing campaign



**Newest TWU members from Bikeshare hold up copies of voluntary recognition agreement (right).**

among the 200-plus bike share workers in New York City, and a vast majority had signed union cards.

The TWU win came just days after another successful organizing drive brought 550 new members into the fold, who are employees of Global Contact Services which is the call center under contract to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority for Access-a-Ride.



**Workers gathered on Bikeshare's first birthday last Memorial Day weekend to declare they wanted a union.**



**Happy Bikeshare worker sports TWU cap. Above: A copy of the voluntary recognition agreement.**

# Union Rolling on Facebook .

By Alan Saly

YOU'RE A BUS OPERATOR ON AN AUTHORIZED break when a supervisor's car makes a quick stop in the lot next to your bus. He gets out and promises to write you up "toot sweet" for being off route. What do you do? A) Wait until you're back at the depot to call your union rep. B) Call the Supervisor who approved your break to complain. C) Log in to Facebook and get advice from someone you trust.

If you answered "C," you'd find yourself in good company. More than a thousand Operators and Maintainers serving the far-flung corners of Brooklyn and parts of Queens have an unofficial online union bulletin board on which to complain, opine, and solicit advice. They log on several times a day to get the skinny from one of their own – TA Surface Division Chair and Bus Operator Willie Rivera, who runs TA Surface Insight, the TWU's largest semi-official Facebook page with nearly 1,400 members.

Willie gives his opinions freely without mincing words and with the wisdom drawn from his 20 years of experience on the bus. He's usually right on the money – which is why a large percentage of his 5,000 members are on line and on board with TA Surface Insight.

Members' give-and-take on TA Surface Insight is mirrored on the MABSTOA Facebook site, moderated by OA Division 1 Vice Chair Donald Yates, who has nearly a thousand members on his page. In Stations, Executive Board Member Paul Piazza hosts some 350 members on Facebook, and in RTO, Section Chair Kia Phua moderates a FB page for his Department.

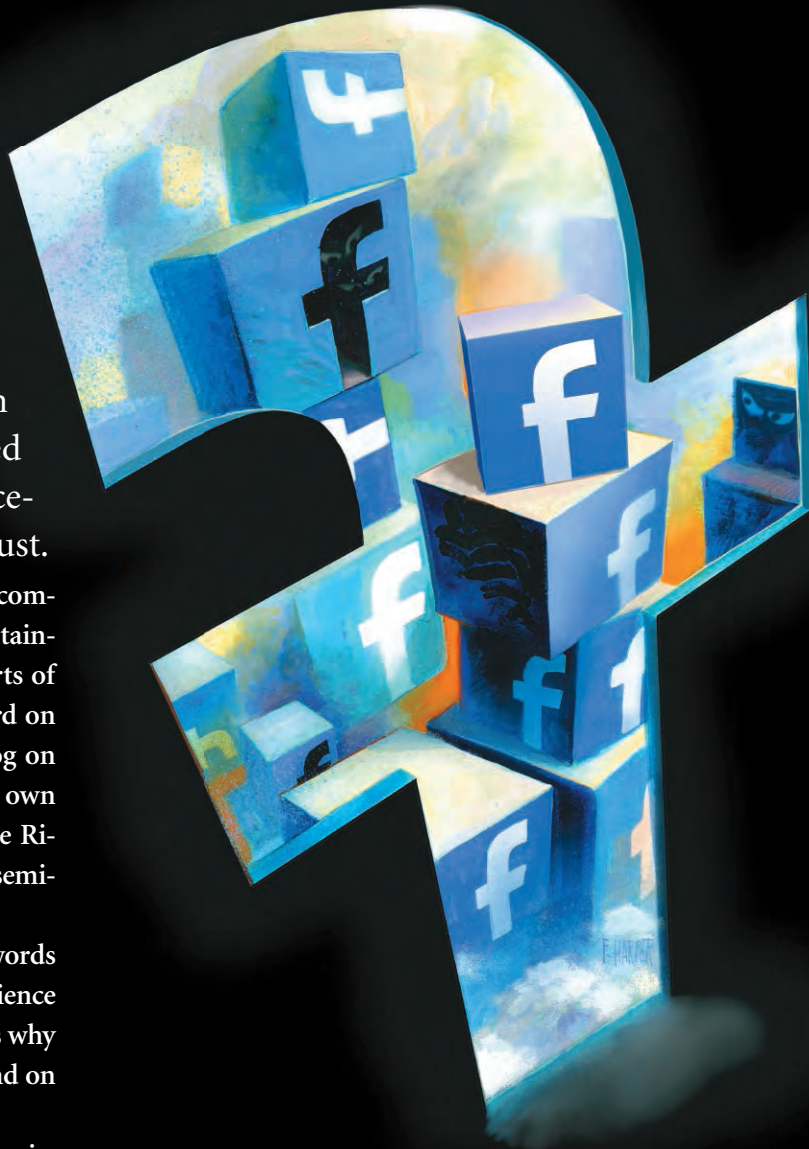
"It's important," says Willie Rivera. "During the contract talks, there was a lot of confusion about what we were going to get because of what the members were seeing on the news. On TA Surface Insight, my members got the information ASAP. We hit the contract hard on that site for a couple of days, and I didn't have any problems after that. My guys tell me all the time that they get good information

from the site, and I update it every single day. Once the new Operators find out about it, they call me to put them in.

But just as the Union is using Facebook to build our strength, so is management using it to tear us down. [See sidebar, "Facebeakies."]

TA Surface members rely on TA Surface Insight for quick answers – and they like the convivial atmosphere of the page.

Willie Rivera tries to avoid politics, and stick to issues which affect the daily lives of Bus Operators. "I do my best to get rid of issues which are political, but I let people vent, and whenever I see a member doing something that they shouldn't, I go on there to make sure that that is corrected.





# ■ ■ But, So Is Management!

Sometimes I will put up the TA rule or memorandum. I'm not harsh. 9 times out of ten, they'll reply saying, "I didn't know that Willie. I appreciate the info."

Don Yates, who moderates the MABSTOA Facebook page, agrees on the importance of this new means of communication. "People are plugged in, no matter where they're at," he says. "It broadens the information available. Members are often not really aware of all their rights, and I use that platform to explain." Don also keeps a tight rein on stereotyping or negative comments towards women. "There are some out there who don't take the page seriously and put crap up, but that goes with any type of communication."

Recently Willie Rivera posted a red light cam image on TA Surface Insight showing a bus being directed through a busy intersection by a Traffic Enforcement Agent – which resulted in the Bus Operator getting a ticket even though the agent waved him through. His directive to his Operators: Wait for the light, regardless of what the enforcement agent says, and don't cross unless there is an emergency.

Unions established the critical right to have a union

bulletin board in the employer's workplace long ago. Recognizing that "power begins with the power to communicate," we carved out the right to a protected area in the shop or depot where we could directly address the members. The most iconic TWU image is the one of our founder, Mike Quill, engaged in talking to the members while standing on a soap box.

Talk is cheap. In the midst of the clamor of voices from all sides it's up to the union to project authority -- grounded in fact and animated by passionate conviction that remains true to our principles. That's why bulletin boards at the depots and shops are usually kept locked up and reserved for official postings. But on Facebook, it's a different story, with everyone having the right to comment unless the administrator hides or deletes their posts.

Facebook pages like Willie Rivera's TA Surface Insight, Don Yates' MABSTOA page, Kia Phua's RTO, or the Stations closed Facebook group -- are unofficial. They don't necessarily reflect the position of the TWU. Yet they are filling a growing need as social media demands our attention on a continuing basis.

## Facebeakies!

### *Management Using FB to Spy on Employees*

There are people who are paid by management to spy on you. The TWU doesn't like them much. They're not union members. In the bygone days of the founding of this Union, Mike Quill and his team called them "beakies."

Now the beakies have happened upon the internet, and they put out a cutesy newsletter called "Special Investigations Unit Reporter," which sounds like a TV show but is actually a running account of how they are scouring the internet for damaging images to use against union members. Notably, the beakies go on Facebook to see if anyone on Workers' Comp seems to be doing anything that calls their injury into question. In the June issue of this rag, the beakies tell the story of a Bus Operator who was allegedly running her own business while out on comp with a psychiatric disability. Another Bus Operator who is out on disability spends time pumping iron at the gym – and the beakies have the pix to prove it.

TWU doesn't support members scamming comp. But we deplore the use of paid informants and spies who often harass union members and collect scalps. Every Facebook user has to understand how to use their privacy settings. Even if you share information only with friends and no one else, know that it had better be able to pass muster when the beakies come looking.

They'll also be scouring personal pages to find out about things like outside employment that's not reported. And if a transit employee makes insulting comments online, and the MTA judges that this reflects badly on the agency, the member could be subject to discipline. Passengers, of course, are also videotaping and posting their experiences in the transit system. What's in public view on your bus or train may receive attention not only from the beakies, but from a world-wide audience.



# TWU Urges Expansion of Bus Rapid Transit in MTA Capital Plan

THERE'LL BE TONS OF MONEY IN THE MTA'S 2015-2019 Capital Plan for mega projects like East Side Access and the 2nd Avenue Subway.

But Local 100 President John Samuelsen wants the MTA plan to include funding for less grandiose projects that would significantly improve service and reliability for a fraction of the cost. He made the union's priorities known in testimony before the NYS Assembly Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions in August. Committee Chair James F. Brennan called the hearing across from City Hall to invite input from major stakeholders like Local 100 on transit priorities, especially for Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island, in advance of the release of the capital plan.

Samuelsen outlined the union's suggestions as follows:

- **Expand Bus Rapid Transit (Select Bus Service)** – Samuelsen said the union believes that Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is New York's solution to congestion, inadequate transportation to jobs and climate change. At minimal cost in comparison to new subway construction, he

said that BRT offers flexible, fast, and convenient surface transportation with the incorporation of dedicated lanes, priority signaling, and real-time travel information. BRT creates pathways to jobs for low-wage workers, he added, especially in the outer boroughs, and he said that a robust BRT network would also reduce our reliance on cars and fossil fuels.

- **State of Good Repair** – The TWU leader said that the capital plan must prioritize efforts to keep the system in good repair. We can no longer delay restoring the system to a state of good repair. Our transit system is over one hundred years old, and regularly encounters problems due to infrastructure deterioration. These issues pose serious risks to both transit riders and workers, but they are avoidable with sufficient funding and staffing to inspect and fix our aging assets," declared Samuelsen.
- **Service Restoration** – The MTA must fully restore the services it cut in 2010. "As the economy continues to rebound, New Yorkers need affordable public transportation to go to work and school," he said.

*The new MTA Capital Plan will be top heavy in money for mega-projects like the 2nd Avenue Subway and East Side Access (shown at right), but Local 100 President John Samuelsen said that the MTA must invest in smaller, yet impactful, improvements like expansion of Bus Rapid Transit (Select Bus).*





# The Phony Public Pension Doomsday Scenario

By David Katzman

GET READY FOR A CRESCENDO OF NOISE ABOUT THE ALLEGED “CRISIS” AND “INSOLVENCY” OF public pension funds. It’s the latest hue and cry about public pensions – doomsday.

The backstory to this chorus consists in two points.

1. A private organization of accountants gets to set reporting standards for public pension funds. This organization – GASB (Government Accounting Standards Board) – has a new rule requiring pension funds to report what their future liabilities WOULD BE – not what they actually are – under a doomsday scenario. New York City will report under this new rule at the end of October.
2. Enemies of public pensions like the New York Post then use this as “proof” that doomsday is here. The New York Times piled on the doomsday cavalcade recently, portraying the City pension funds as awash in crisis, claiming that the funds’ performance is “hampered by an antiquated and inefficient governing structure.” (Each fund has a Board of Trustees comprised of the representatives of elected officials such as the Mayor and the Comptroller, as well as of unions whose members belong to the fund.) The Times said investment decisions should be made by “experts in boardrooms,” presumably not the same Wall Street “experts” who imploded the economy in 2008.

Here’s the good news. Doomsday is NOT here. This is a theoretical exercise.

Yes, in places like New Jersey and Illinois, pension funds are having trouble. But, they are having trouble because year after year, government employers did not make the payments they were supposed to make. No pension fund, public or private, can do well if the employer does not pay its share. That is simple common sense.

But most public pension funds are not having that kind of trouble. Many of them did take a hit when Wall Street melted down in 2008. But they have been rebuilding since then.

Take our pension fund for members at NYCTA, NYCERS (the New York City Employee Retirement System), for example. Last year, NYCERS’ investments earned a 17% rate of return and saw its assets rise to a record level. Its average returns over the past ten years have been comfortably above the 7% target rate set a few years ago. NYCERS does have less

money on hand than it should. This is because of the Wall Street meltdown, but also because back in the Giuliani years, when investments were skyrocketing, government employers did not see the need to pay in more than a token amount.

Two years ago, at the expected rate of return of 7% on its investments, NYCERS found itself \$23 billion behind where it wanted to be. Under state law, public employers started paying extra every year for 14 years to close that gap. Between these catch-up payments and the investment returns, the gap is closing.

But GASB is not dealing in these realities. GASB asks: What if the rate of return was 4% instead of 7%? Then what would the gap be? This is a theoretical exercise. But enemies of public pensions like the New York Post report these theoretical exercises as facts.

There is only one serious scenario under which NYCERS would get into trouble. This is if New York ended defined benefit pensions and put new members – or all members going forward – into individual 401(k) plans. Then the employer contributions to funds like NYCERS would cease coming in. Ironically, that is just the scenario people like the New York Post, and Wall Street toadies wish for.

Want to keep your pension safe? Tell Wall Street and the Post to leave public pensions alone.

## NYCERS REALIZED AN IMPRESSIVE 17 PERCENT RETURN ON INVESTMENTS IN 2013.





# Family Day 2014

## A Home Run for Local 100 Members



THOUSANDS OF LOCAL 100 MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES TURNED OUT ON JUNE 7 FOR TWU LOCAL 100'S annual Family Day celebration at MCU Park in Coney Island.

For the fourth year in a row, the event was greeted by glorious weather. Gorgeous blue skies, warm temperatures and low humidity helped make the event possibly the best attended yet.

Festivities included all the food and soft drinks that anyone could possibly consume, a talent show, a great DJ, face painting, sprinklers, and lots of kids "moonwalks." Also, hundreds took advantage of discounted tickets to Luna Park.

New York Mets legendary pitcher Dwight "Doc"

Gooden made an appearance, greeting partygoers, signing autographs and throwing out the first pitch in the annual championship softball game, this year pitting Local 100's squad against a tough team from Local 101 (National Grid). We won. Also, teams from Local 229 and Local 501 competed.

Individual departments sponsored numerous tailgate parties, which were big hits as usual. TWU International President Harry Lombardo joined the festivities as well.









# Family Day 2014





# Family Day 2014







*Those attending the veterans conference visited the 911 Memorial after business on the first day of the conference.*

# Veterans Issues Become Rallying Cry for TWU Locals

TWU MEMBERS WHO HAVE SERVED IN THE U.S. ARMED FORCES CAME TO THE TWU LOCAL 100 UNION HALL from all over the United States during the first week of August to discuss ways to advocate veterans' concerns state by state and nationally.

In March, the TWU's Air Transport Division Veteran's Committee leadership voted unanimously to expand the committee to accept as members TWU servicemen from all four of our union's Divisions — Transit, Rail, Air and Gaming. The first measure of that vote was a successful all-TWU conference in NYC, hosted by Local 100.

"What we did in New York was solidifying and commencing the integration of what used to be the ATD Veterans Committee with the local veterans committees in all of the Divisions," said the International TWU's Veterans Liaison Jose Galarza.

"Local 100 has been concentrating on a legislative agenda with its veterans. The ATD Veterans Committee, as it existed before, had been focusing more on giving back,

fundraising, and service projects. We want to network and put everything together so that everything we do as veterans has the greatest impact."

The Conference was opened by TWU Local 100 President and TWU International Executive VP John Samuelsen, who welcomed participants from across the country to New York and pledged his and the union leadership's full support for the Conference's agenda. "The TWU of America is committed to putting new resources into the political arena for our Veterans," he said. "It's time to bring increased national attention to bringing more benefits to the men and women who have served our country."

"This conference puts the TWU in the vanguard of protecting, utilizing, and getting new Veterans' rights leg-



*Local 100 President John Samuelsen opens conference on Aug. 5, 2014. Local 100 Veterans Committee members (at table in right of photo) include Dexter Victory, Phil Caruano, VP Kevin Harrington and Kevin McCawley.*



isolation passed in the United States,” said Local 100 RTO Vice President Kevin Harrington, who chairs the Local 100 committee. “It forms the basis for a national network to help TWU Vets and all Veterans.”

Harrington and USMC Vet Kevin McCawley educated conference attendees about Local 100’s success in getting a bill for three years’ buyback pension credit for veterans through both the New York State Senate and the Assembly. At press time it was pending before Governor Andrew Cuomo.

Elected officials, including New York State Senator Martin Golden, a principal sponsor of legislation to allow vets in New York State to purchase three years of pension credit, addressed the conference. In his speech, Senator Golden said that getting his bill, the Veterans Equality Act, through the Senate was “one of the proudest moments of my career.”

The TWU International leadership has asked that all of

our veterans connect with the TWU Veterans Committee and encourages all locals to communicate with members about the important work that TWUVC does and the need for all of our vets to get involved.



*State Sen. Martin Golden (R-Brooklyn) addresses the Veterans conference.*

## Veterans’ Lobby Day Paves Way for Key Legislative Win in Albany

On April 29, Local 100 veterans joined vets from other unions on a bus trip to Albany to lobby for the Military Buyback Bill. The measure, that was some weeks later passed by the legislature, amends the New York State Retirement and Social Security Law to allow all public sector workers who were honorably discharged from the military to purchase up to three years of credit year for year towards their pension. Currently, only vets who served in war zones are eligible, a situation particularly unfair to women vets and vets who served in peacetime.

The bill is on Gov. Cuomo’s desk for signature, but he has not indicated his intent as this issue goes to the printer.



*NYS Assembly members (front row) Felix Ortiz, James Tedisco, Edward Hennessy, Amy Paulin, Angelo Santabarbara and Shelley Mayer, with Local 100 veterans and members of other veterans' groups and unions. Photo was taken on the famous Million Dollar Staircase at the Capitol.*



*Local 100 veterans who travelled to Albany for Veterans Lobby Day are shown at the legislative office building.*



# EVENTS: Never on the Sidelines

## TWU Marches in Dominican Day Parade; Samuelson Honored

Spirits were high on August 10 as TWU Local 100 members marched up Sixth Avenue as part of the Dominican Day Parade. Prior to the parade, many attended a Dominican Day breakfast in Washington Heights, where TWU Local 100 President John Samuelson was honored with the Community Service Award presented by Dominican political leaders including Councilman Ydanis Rodriguez and State Senator Adriano Espaillat. Both politicians have a strong record of supporting mass transit funding and have joined Local 100 in our campaigns.



*Samuelson (center), receiving public service award, is surrounded by prominent politicians, including Public Advocate Tish James, State Sen. Adriano Espaillat, NYS Comptroller Tom DiNapoli, State Sen. Gustavo Rivera, City Council President Melissa Mark-Viverito and NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer.*



*Members on TWU Local 100 float enjoy the march along Sixth Avenue.*



*President John Samuelson (center) and Recording Secretary LaTonya Crisp-Sauray (rear left) with NY State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli and State Sen. Adriano Espaillat along with union members and staffers.*



## Union Turns Out for Puerto Rican Day Parade

Backed by a large float with a powerful DJ, TWU Local 100 marched up Fifth Avenue in Manhattan's largest parade celebrating Puerto Rican Day in early June. Great food was provided for members before the parade began by Liz Wilson of the TWU Women's Committee, along with RTO Officer Erica Guerrido and Nancy Martinez of CED. Photos show members and families prior to the march. Center in group photo behind TWU banner is Local 100 Recording Secretary LaTonya Crisp-Sauray.



## Union Shows LGBT Solidarity



TWU Local 100 Recording Secretary LaTonya Crisp-Sauray and Admin. VP Angel Giboyeaux boarded TWU's float to celebrate and support LGBT members of the union during the annual pride parade down Fifth Avenue from 39th Street to Greenwich Village. The union provided food and refreshments to rank and file and union officers, as well as extending hospitality to marchers from other unions including the Carpenters, who assembled with transit workers as the parade began. TWU Local 100 is proud to support diversity in our workforce and stand against discrimination of any sort in employment.



## EVENTS *(Continued from page 19)*

### Labor Press Honors Samuelson at Annual Event

Hundreds of labor leaders, including AFL-CIO national President Richard Trumka, turned out in early June for the 2nd Annual Labor Leadership Awards dinner, sponsored by Labor Press, the only media outlet in the New York region providing unfiltered labor news.

Labor Press, founded in 2009 by veteran labor journalist Neal Tepel, has a growing readership of its e-news and Labor Press magazine of 40,000 government officials, legislators,

union officers, rank and file, newspaper reporters and other news organizations, as well as community and business leaders.

This year's award recipients included: TWU Local 100 President John Samuelson; Operating Engineers International President James Callahan; Teamsters Local 831 (City Sanitation union) President Harry Nespoli; 1199 Secretary Treasurer Maria Castenada, and AFSCME International Vice President Raglan George.



***TWU President John Samuelson (center with award) is congratulated by Dylan Valle, Marvin Holland, Secretary Treasurer Earl Phillips, Labor Attorney Vincent Pitta (Pitta & Giblin, LLP), ATU Local 726 President Daniel Cassella, and Labor Press founder Neal Tepel***



***TWU Local 100 President John Samuelson (right) with AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka (center) and New York City Central Labor Council President Vinnie Alvarez.***

### Prospect Park Track Gathering

On a beautiful day in late June, Track Department members kicked back away from the job at a leisurely picnic in Prospect Park. MOW officers, including Vice President Tony Utano (right) and LES Chair John Chiarello (2nd from left) joined in the fun.





# Big Turnout at West Indian Day Parade

With TWU Local 100 Secretary-Treasurer Earl Phillips as an honored guest, union officers and rank and file members stepped off from Buffalo Avenue to march down Eastern Parkway in high style on September 1, 2014 for the West Indian Day Parade. Our procession took nearly a city block, with the TWU float backed up by the union van, an MTA bus, and the TWU International's touring bus. We stepped down the parkway with acclaim from thousands of spectators. During the parade, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo and NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio made a point of stopping at the Local 100 area to shake hands with President Samuelsen. TWU Local 100 was an official sponsor of the event, and Earl Phillips had a place at the podium at the political breakfast that began the event.



**TWU officers and members gather at West Indian Day parade.**



**Sec'y Treasurer Earl Phillips (center) and Recording Sec'y LaTonay Crisp-Sauray (2nd from right) with candidate for the State Assembly Rodneyse Bichotte (2nd from left) at WID parade.**



**Mayor Bill de Blasio greets President John Samuelsen.**



**Member and daughter enjoy the march through Brooklyn.**

## Union Celebrates Dia de los Obreros

Local 100 celebrated the annual Dia de los Obreros with a gathering on August 15 at the Arturo Schomburg Library in Harlem. Dia de los Obreros celebrates the accomplishments and contributions of Latinos and Latinas in the workplace, their communities and the nation.

Participants had a choice of food from Ecuador, Colombia, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Cuba, Chile, Argen-

tina, and Puerto Rico. They were entertained by a Mariachi Band, and saw a preview of recently released full feature movie on the live of Cesar Chavez.

Administrative Vice President Angel Giboyeaux gave special recognition awards to State Sen. Adrian Espailat, and Edith Padilla, retired President of the New York League of Puerto Rican Women.



**Attendees enjoy Mariachi band performance.**



**Admin. Vice President Angel Giboyeaux with awardee Edith Padilla.**



**Admin. Vice President Angel Giboyeaux with second awardee, State Sen. Adriano Espailat.**



## *A Sense of Justice for Maintainer's Family*

# Breakthrough Ruling Connects Diesel Emissions to Lung Cancer

THE FAMILY OF DECEASED LOCAL 100 BUS MAINTAINER ANTHONY NIGRO HAS WON A LANDMARK job-related death claim case before the Workers Compensation Board that establishes a link between exposure to diesel exhaust and cancer for the first time in any court or legal proceeding.

Brother Nigro died of lung cancer in 2012 a few months after retiring. He had worked for 28 years as a Maintainer at MTA facilities, most recently Quill Depot.

The family's oncologist told Brother Nigro's widow, Dorota "Dora" Nigro, that he believed diesel exposure over many years was a cause of the cancer.

Attorney Robert Grey, of Grey & Grey, LLP, who filed the claim on behalf of the Nigro family, said that this is the "first case where a Workers Compensation Board, or any other court has recognized the cause and effect of diesel to occupational disease."

"In a legal sense, someone has to be the first to climb Mt. Everest in litigation on diesel exhaust," said Grey. "Hopefully, this is our Mt. Everest, and the path for other claimants who have been harmed by diesel exposure is less difficult."

The MTA disputed the claim and presented expert testimony by pulmonologist Dr. Lawrence Scharer who claimed that Brother Nigro had a history of smoking, and that "cigarettes was far and away the more important" factor in this case than the diesel exposure.

However, Grey produced an expert witness specializing in occupational and preventative medicine who testified that "diesel dust emissions are a lung carcinogen" and that Brother Nigro's "occupation as a new York City Transit Authority mechanic for 28 years provided him ample exposure . . . to diesel exhaust emissions. . . And that exposure either caused or contributed to his lung cancer." The expert said that smoking was also "a likely contributor," but that the diesel emissions were "more likely than not a significant contributing factor in causing or aggravating" Mr. Nigro's illness and death.



*Left, Anthony Nigro, at Quill Depot.*

*Above, Dorota Nigro, participating in recent NYCOSH symposium on diesel exhaust dangers.*



Three of Brother Nigro's retired co-workers gave powerful testimony supporting the family's claim of regular exposure to diesel exhaust.

Quill Depot Chair Vincent Coppola recalls Nigro as "a hard worker who made everyone smile. He knew everyone throughout the system, and he had friends in every location. His death so soon after retirement and the family's case has opened a lot of eyes around here. I think this successful case will open the legal doors for all bus maintainers who get sick in the future."

Workers' Compensation Law Judge Jay Leibowitz ruled in favor of the Nigro family and awarded them a weekly benefit of \$773.00 as well as approximately \$100,000 in benefits retroactive to his death, and a \$6,000 funeral expenses benefit.

The MTA has not appealed the ruling.

As for what this ruling means long term for other workers, Attorney Grey said: "The importance of this case cannot be underestimated. The law often fails to keep pace with new medical and scientific knowledge. At one time, conditions like asbestosis and carpal tunnel syndrome were not recognized as work-related. Today, their connection to work is well-known, but every time the law is expanded to cover new injuries and illnesses, and to protect more workers, the process has to start with one claim, by one



**Tony Nigro, second from left, is shown at Quill Depot, with buddies at a retirement celebration.**

person. This is that case, the first one in which the workers' compensation system has recognized a link between diesel exhaust and lung cancer. It will help pave the way for others to be compensated and to get medical care, and we hope that it will also encourage the Transit Authority to take steps to protect the occupational safety and health of its workers."

Dr. Frank Goldsmith, Director, Local 100 Occupational Health, added: "This case is really a monumental decision. It's reminiscent of where we were with asbestos in the '70s. This is how the asbestos fight started, with just a few cases."

## Union Mourns Conductor Jimmy Willis, 59, WTC Responder

The Local 100 union family is mourning the untimely death of retired Conductor Jimmy Willis, who may be the first transit worker to suffer a service-related death resulting from the World Trade Center disaster. His wife of 15 years, Christy, reported that Jimmy had a fatal heart attack on Tuesday, June 24, 2014.

Jimmy had 18 years of service to New York City Transit when he retired. He was a former President of the NYC Transit Emerald Society and also served as the union's coordinator for heritage events.

His greatest contribution to Local 100 came after the WTC attack, where he lost two cousins, Firefighter Michael Roberts of Ladder 35, and FDNY Chief of the Special Operations Command, Ray Downey.

Jimmy was an implacable fighter with management on safety issues. The WTC disaster energized his activism.

Appointed as a Special Assistant to the Local 100 President after 9/11, he organized the union's response to the health problems of workers after the attack and was an out-

spoken champion in getting transit workers credit for having a major part in the emergency response to 911. His advocacy for WTC rescuers was recognized by many, including Senator Hillary Clinton. He fought successfully for federal dollars to compensate WTC rescue and recovery workers. Mt. Sinai physician Steven Markowitz, who ran the WTC clinic at the hospital, called him "a selfless, passionate, big-hearted and smart guy."

Jimmy suffered from a variety of health problems after his service at Ground Zero including respiratory trouble, kidney failure, and cardiac illnesses. Besides his wife, Jimmy leaves two stepchildren, Angela, who served in the U.S. Navy, and Amber, as well as two grandchildren, Christopher Jr. (CJ) and Autumn.







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# 1st Westchester Family Day

LOCAL 100 SPONSORED ITS FIRST EVER WESTCHESTER FAMILY appreciation Day Picnic at Redmond Park in Yonkers on July 13, 2014. Top union leaders, including President John Samuelsen, Secretary Treasurer Earl Phillips, Administrative Vice President Angel Giboyeaux and Vice President Tony Utano shared a day of food, music, and fun for the kids with 400 TWU members and families mainly from school bus properties in Westchester. Bus Operators from Liberty Lines, our largest property in the County, also came to the event.

Local 100 President Samuelsen said that the Union expects to put forward a renewed commitment to organizing new properties in Westchester this fall.

Local politicians including Assemblywoman Shelly Mayer (middle photo left) and State Senator Andrea Stew-

art Cousins, the Democratic Conference leader, attended the event and greeted attendees warmly.







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## EVENTS *(Continued from page 29)*

### African American Day Parade a TWU Joy Ride

In what has become a signature event for TWU Local 100, hundreds of members marched and rode through Harlem in the Annual African-American Day Parade. TWU Local 100 President John Samuelson, Secretary Treasurer Earl Phillips, Recording Secretary LaTonya Crisp-Sauray and Administrative Vice President Angel Giboyeaux joined other officers and many rank and file members in the march, along with a large contingent of bikers on motorcycles who come out annually to share in the festivities. “TWU was there in force, to celebrate black heritage. There was plenty of music, plenty of food, and plenty of good times with our brothers and sisters,” said Administrative VP Angel Giboyeaux.



*Union's top four officers join with TWU contingent at African American Day parade.*



### TWU at Climate March: Mass Transit the Answer

An estimated 310,000 marchers called on world governments to take action to reduce global warming at the Peoples Climate March on Sept. 21, 2104. TWU Local 100 played an important role in organizing the march by giving 350.org, the main sponsor, space at the Union Hall to train Peacekeepers who were present throughout the event wearing distinctive shirts and armbands. Local 100 officials and rank and file also marched. Transit workers have a particular stake in climate change: Not only do rising sea levels threaten transit infrastructure, but the solutions to climate change should include more funding for mass transit to give people an alternative to gas-guzzling cars. TA Surface Vice President JP Patafio closed out the labor rally that preceded the march with a powerful speech in which he called upon corporate interests to take the environment into account or face shut-down by angry unions and citizens.



*Vice President JP Patafio (holding banner) leads TWU'ers at climate march.*





# TWU Puts Up an El of a Fight!

By James Gannon

*DESPITE BEING FEATURED IN MANY FULL-LENGTH MOVIES, INCLUDING SUCH CLASSICS AS King Kong, Lost Weekend and The Naked City, the iconic 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue El suffered the same fate as its counterparts on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenues. But it didn't go without a fight from Local 100.*

It's hard to find a photo of old New York without one of the City's historic el structures as a backdrop. The els were engineering marvels that provided a vital transportation network for the great, growing metropolis. New York was the economic engine of America, and the destination for millions of immigrants seeking jobs and a new life. None of it would have been possible without the transportation infrastructure provided by the els.

The 9th Avenue was the first elevated line in New York and the first to be decommissioned. It opened its doors on April 20th, 1871 and eventually serviced stations all the way from South Ferry to Kingsbridge Road in the Bronx. It was also the first electrified railway in New York City, and was the first with three tracks to allow for express service.

The opening of the 8th Avenue A/C/E lines in 1932 spelled the beginning of the end for the 9th Avenue el. Demolition of the el began in 1940. The so-called Polo Grounds Shuttle, the last remaining portion of the 9th Avenue line, finally ceased service in 1958 after the New York Giants moved to San Francisco.

The 6th Avenue EL, which ran through the heart of Manhattan's business district to 59th Street, was razed in 1939 after years of business and real estate owners carping that the el was unsightly, noisy and that it depressed business and property values. It was replaced by the 6th Avenue IND line, which debuted service between 1936 and 1940. Local 100 fought the el's destruction as a job-destroying power grab by moneyed interests. More than 600 workers lost jobs, but Local 100 continued to fight to find employ-



*Getting ready for 149th Street rally with el in background.*



ment for them on the new IND line, at other city agencies and in the private sector.

The 2nd Avenue El was the last of the four to be constructed, opening on March 1, 1880. In the south, Chatham Square was the major transfer station with the 3rd Avenue el. Newspaper reports of the 2nd Avenue el's opening demonstrate that carping about the City's transit system is an age-old tradition.

The *New York Sun*, in its March 2, 1880 edition described the opening at Chatham Square in the following unflattering manner: *"The Second Avenue elevated railroad was thrown open yesterday morning, in a condition of incompleteness that surprised its patrons, in view of the length of time employed in preparation and the resources at command for its construction. All beyond the mere building of the track had evidently been left to the incompetent, and everything was done in a hurry."*

*"It was in the early commission hours, and the throngs forcing their way in opposite directions up and down these narrow stairways were so dense that it took half an hour of violent effort to cross from one train to another. Sometimes for several minutes the crowd would be so wedged that movement became impossible. .... But as annoying as the morning's crowding had been, that of the evening commission hours were worse."*

But there was something special about the 3rd Avenue el. It was a vital public transportation artery on the East Side of Manhattan and into the Bronx, running from South Ferry north to 129th Street in Manhattan and on into the Bronx to Gun Hill Road.



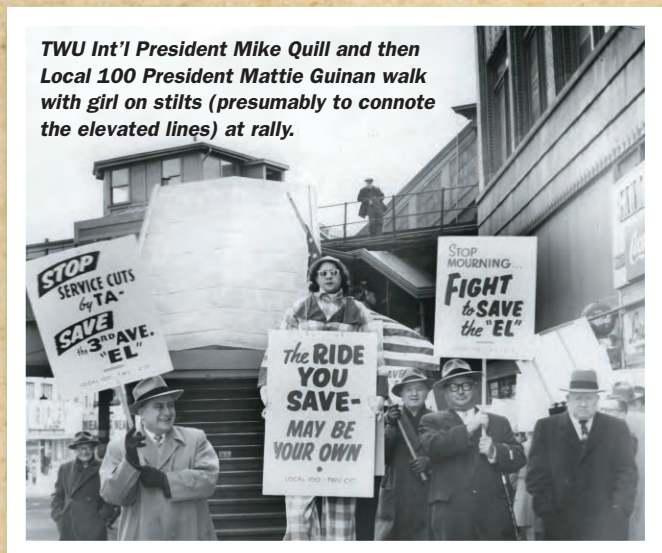
**The union message was, "Build the 2nd Avenue Subway Before El Comes Down."**

Unlike new subway lines that served the West Side of Manhattan, there was nothing close to that to supplement service on the East Side should the el be shuttered.

The Transit Authority started chopping up the el in stages. It closed the South Ferry spur in 1950 and the City Hall spur in 1953.



**Photo shows riders packing the 3rd Avenue line.**



**TWU Int'l President Mike Quill and then Local 100 President Mattie Guinan walk with girl on stilts (presumably to connote the elevated lines) at rally.**



As doomsday approached for the main portion of the line from Chatham Square to 149th Street in the Bronx, TWU mounted a community-based effort to pressure the politicians to backtrack. Proponents however claimed that a 1951 \$500 million bond issue to build the 2nd Avenue Subway promised better service for the East Side in not the too distant future.

TWU countered by demanding that the City "build the 2nd Avenue subway before the el comes down."

The union sponsored an energetic petition drive demanding that the City Council block the TA from closing the el. As a May 12, 1955 shutdown date approached, the union sponsored two big rallies to build public pressure against the plan. The first was held at the 149th Street on March 27, 1955. The second, and even larger rally was held on April 23, 1955 at the 116th Street station in East Harlem.

TWU International President Michael J. Quill viciously attacked the closure labeling it a "huge financial swindle by big business."

Quill also lambasted the "Rockefeller interests" which had heavily supported closure of the 6th Avenue el. And

he demanded that New York State Attorney General investigate "the moneybags behind the drive to destroy this vitally needed service."

Then Local 100 Secretary-Treasurer Ellis Van Riper condemned transit officials for their actions, saying that they "are men who would not know the difference between a turnstile and a motorman's cab. These are the people who are out to wreck transit in this city."

Unfortunately, on May 12, 1955 the main portion of the line closed from Chatham Square to East 149th Street in the Bronx. As predicted by the union, the removal was a catalyst in a wave of new construction and escalating property values for real estate bigwigs.

Sixty years later, East Siders are still waiting for the 2nd Avenue Subway.

Two days after the el's last run, the *New York Times* mourned the event in an editorial, asking if the subway itself might someday become obsolete. "Will we or our successors cry when this happens? Who knows? But meanwhile, farewell, 'El,' a long, long, long farewell."



Getting petitions signed from among New York's Latin community.



Pickers at save the el rally.



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