



# THE EAGLE

LOCAL 1103

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April 2009

## CWA Local 1103 Fights for the Working Middle Class in Albany

*Members of CWA Local 1103's Executive Board flank NYS Assemblyman Richard Brodsky and thank him for his dedication to the working men and women of NYS.*



"A new kind of politics, where the rich and corporations don't control everything, that's the change you brought to New York on Nov 4, 2008," declared Assemblymen Richard Brodsky on Lobby day. That was the day we as the working middle class ended the 25 year strangle hold Republicans had on the New York State Senate. Politics 101, if the majority leader in the Senate doesn't want your bills to get passed, they simply never allow them to come up for a vote. Worker friendly legislation hasn't stood a chance in over two decades in NY because the majority party in control sided with the wealthy and corporations. Now that has changed, and it's our job to hold those we voted in accountable.

So on March 10th, 2009, your executive board traveled to Albany, New York to fight for four key

legislative actions. The first item on our list was a joint action for CWA and Verizon. In an attempt to balance the New York State budget, Gov. Patterson is proposing to increase the fees that Verizon would have to pay the Public Service Commission (PSC). The Company currently pays 10 million dollars a year in fees to the PSC. Under the Patterson budget Verizon would pay an additional 55 million, while the Cable TV companies would pay nothing. While we do not always agree with the company, increasing the fees on the only employer in New

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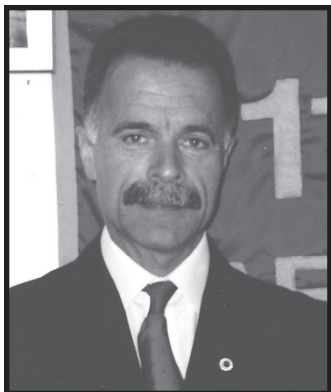


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# In My View . . .



As I speak with members from the different departments we represent within Verizon, it is interesting to see how the economic downturn affects everyone during these stressful times. For instance, overtime is virtually non-existent in the C.O., Coin, Specials, and Construction departments. However, some overtime is available in VSC, and I/R Copper, with the lion

share of overtime in FIOS. Although some workplace irritants exist, contract violations are at a minimum.

Despite the economy, our jobs in Verizon are very secure. The timing of our August 2008 negotiations and the acquisitions of both our "34th Franchise Agreement" and the "New York City and the 5 Boroughs" franchise agreements were part of an overall plan that tipped the scales in the Union's favor.

In contrast to Verizon, consider the plight of our non-Bell units. For instance, our Emergency Telecommunicators lost an enormous portion of their employer-provided monetary investments due to the ailing economy. The discussions there do not include the topic of overtime but revolve around the amount of jobs we can save.

Additionally, our Hospital workers and Paraprofessional units have not escaped the economic downturn, nor have our Library and Municipal workers who find themselves in a situation in which Management is requesting to open up our contracts mid-term in order to determine what "give-backs" they need to survive. Additionally, do not forget the limited number of Motor Vehicle Mechanics that lost their jobs to a recent layoff.

Yes, my brother's and sisters, you can rest assured that whatever hurdles Management implement, we will be there to answer the call. Whether it is an irritant, a contract violation, or a lay off, we will be there to vigorously represent each and every member everyday.

On an important and related side note, it is my opinion that the passing of the Employee Free Choice Act (E.F.C.A.) would help to stimulate the troubled economy. The boom in unionization actually jump-started this country's economic metabolism during the Great Depression. The same is possible now.

Beware of corporate CEOs who are spending a ridiculous amount of money to prevent the E.F.C.A. and "the demise of a civilization," as Bernie Marcus, a co-founder of Home Depot stated during his lecture to other corporate CEOs on a Bank of America-hosted conference call in October. Please take a minute to look at the highlights of this important bill listed below.

## What Employee Free Choice Would Do:

If a majority of workers in a workplace sign union authorization cards, validated by the NLRB, the company must recognize the union. If a majority of employees call for an election instead, the NLRB will hold one.

**Penalties for companies breaking the law are increased.**

Up to \$20,000 per violation for willfully or repeatedly violating employees' rights during organizing drives or bargaining the first contract.

Triple back pay for workers fired or discriminated against for pro-union activity during a drive.

The NLRB must seek a federal court injunction when there is reason to believe a company has violated workers' rights during a drive, such as firing or threatening to fire union supporters. Precedent says an injunction would be issued immediately.

**Companies may not drag out first-contract bargaining indefinitely.** If the two sides cannot reach a contract within 90 days, either one may request mediation from federal mediators. If mediation doesn't work, they go to binding arbitration.

Joseph A. Barca, Jr.  
President

## THE EAGLE

Proud To Be 1103

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York that is investing and building an infrastructure is the wrong thing to do. Especially while our head-to-head competitor gets a free ride. More importantly, we believe any increase in costs to the Company may have a negative affect on our jobs, due to a possible shift in investment.

While we were lobbying side-by-side with the company on the issue of increased fees we were opposed to another budgetary issue concerning PSC regulation. Currently, there are safeguards in the public service laws that prevent anti-consumer, anti-worker practices on the traditional telephone network. The CWA opposes any change to these safeguards. The Union believes that any retreat from regulation is a mistake and should not be considered as part of the budget process. Assemblymen Brodsky as always will be championing our position in this matter.

The third issue was a centered on health care; the union lobbied hard to bring legislative attention to the proper staffing needs at hospitals across New York State. Patient care is a priority for the health care professionals

that CWA Local 1103 represents. At Nyack Hospital, our Members face a work environment that is challenging and rewarding, however, the demands on them increase daily. To preserve the highest quality of patient care, CWA knows that only a proper patient-to-staff ratio will achieve this ethical goal. Therefore, we



*Business Agent Anthony Pugliese, Vice President Kevin Sheil, Business Agent Mark Crumm, Local 1103 RMC President Jeanette Spoor and Business Agent Kevin Scrobola in Albany, NY.*

urged our legislators to fight any cuts in state health care funding and to fight for proper staffing levels.

The final issue for your Executive Board and the National Union was New York State's budget. Due to a 16.8 billion dollar shortfall in the state budget, Gov Patterson is proposing deep cuts to Education, Municipalities and Healthcare. The Union believes

the current proposed NYS budget will cause unreasonable increases in school and property taxes that will be devastating for New York's working middle class. To that end, the Local has been asking Members to contact their Assembly members and Senators through an e-mail campaign on our website that requests the legislators support a progressive income tax plan that slightly increases taxes on the wealthiest New Yorkers and would help close the gap on the shortfall. This plan would only raise income taxes on those New Yorkers making an annual gross income of \$315,000. Today, a CWA Local 1103 Member pays 11.10% of his income in NY State taxes, while the richest New Yorker only pays 6.5% of

their income in NYS taxes. Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins is a Prime Co-Sponsor of this bill. To learn more about the progressive income tax plan go to our website@ [www.cwa1103.org](http://www.cwa1103.org) and visit the action center.

**JOE MAYHEW,  
Business Agent**





# Labor History

## ACROSS

1 society organized by printers in New York in 1794

3 Davis-Bacon Act provided for the payment of these types of wages for employees of contractors on public construction

5 the law that prohibited wage difference for pay based on sex

6 Location of the First Labor Day Celebration

9 Published "The Jungle"

11 1890, United

\_\_\_\_\_ of America formed

13 President of CWA

15 Virginia farmers rebel against corrupt government in 1676, name the event

16 Massacre precipitated by conflict between ropeworkers and British soldier

17 He founded the Black National

18 Country with the bloodiest history of labor of any industrialized nation on earth

19 said, "Thank God that we have a system of labor where

there can be a strike."  
20 early colonists arrived under this version of bound labor; not slave

## DOWN

2 In 1955, the

AFL-CIO reunited with

\_\_\_\_\_ as first President

4 name of the first society of working women organized in 1765

7 union on strike for 4

months in 1989

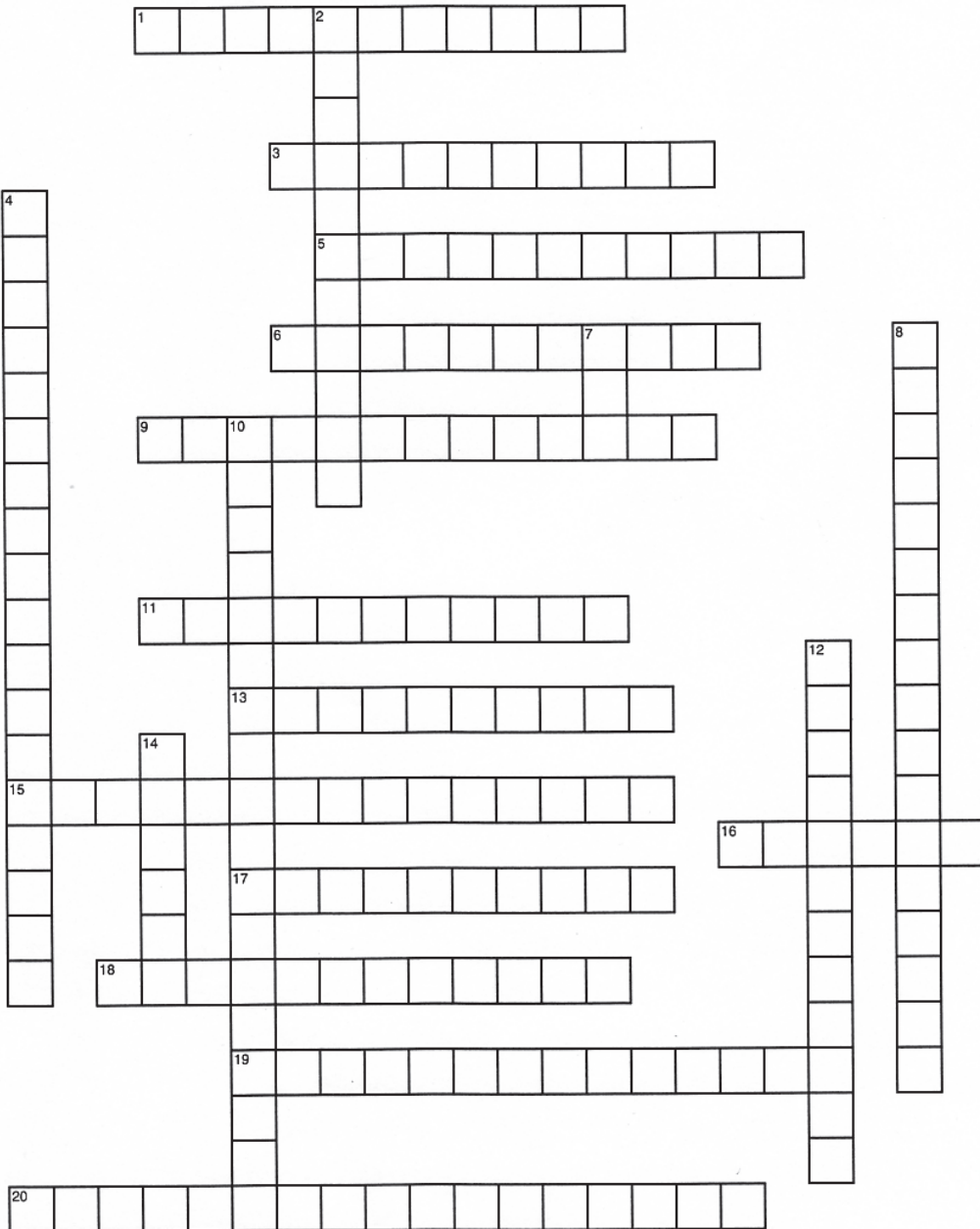
8 General Motors agreed to recognize them as bargaining agents in 1937

10 company name where 146 workers,

mostly women, were killed in a fire in 1911

12 Name the state where the Homestead Strike occurred

14 Gerry \_\_\_\_\_



www.CrosswordWeaver.com

# Obama Signs Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act

WASHINGTON--The first law Democratic President Bill Clinton signed 16 years ago helped woman workers, so it was only fitting the first law Democratic President Barack Obama signed did that, too: The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act.

With the graying gentle grandmother from Gadsden, Ala., standing just behind, the chief executive on Jan. 29 restored the right of workers -- women, minorities, the disabled, those discriminated against because of sexual preference, or those of differing religions -- to sue their employers for pay discrimination.

The U.S. Supreme Court took that right away in ruling in 2007 in Ledbetter's case. Near the end of her 19-year supervisory career with Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co., in Gadsden, she found her employer had always discriminated against her in pay on the basis of sex. She won in lower courts, but lost in the Supreme Court, 5-4.

The five-man majority, all named by GOP presidents, said the only time Ledbetter -- or any other worker -- could sue was within 180 days of being hired. It threw out her case, and her \$360,000 award. The new law, passed over House GOP opposition, overturned that High Court ruling.

Ironically, Ledbetter told Press Associates Union News Service last year, she suffered huge pay discrimination as a supervisor. She was unprotected by labor law. Rank-and-file female workers at the plant suffered far less pay discrimination, she added, because they were protected by their United Steelworkers contract,

Ledbetter "set out on a journey that would take more than 10 years, take her all the way to the Supreme Court, and to this day and this bill which will help others get the justice she was denied. Because while this bill bears her name, Lilly knows this story isn't just about her.

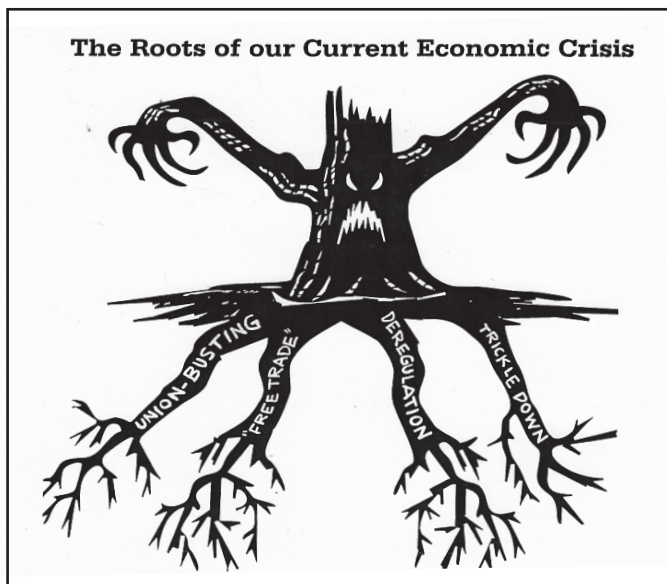
"It's the story of women across this country still earning just 78 cents for every dollar men earn -- women of color even less -- which means that today, in the year 2009, countless women are still losing thousands of dollars in salary, income and retirement savings over the course of a lifetime," the president

stated.

"Equal pay is by no means just a women's issue -- it's a family issue," he declared. "This bill today is to send a clear message: That making our economy work means making sure it works for everybody; that there are no second-class citizens in our workplaces," Obama added.

At a White House luncheon afterwards, Ledbetter thanked the allies who helped her win the fight. Though she did not list them by name, they included the nation's unions and prominent womens' rights groups.

"Goodyear will never have to pay me what it cheated me out of. In fact, I will never see a cent from my case," she said. "But with the passage and president's signature today, I have an even richer reward: I know that my daughter and granddaughters, and your daughters and your granddaughters, will have a better deal ... With this win we will make a big difference in the real world."



## C.W.A. LOCAL 1103 - 2009 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

(Please Print)

Applicant's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Local Member's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Soc. Sec. # \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title (if active Member) \_\_\_\_\_

Work Location (if active Member) \_\_\_\_\_

I herewith apply for inclusion in the June 2009 drawing of the Local 1103 Scholarship Program. I certify that I meet the eligibility requirements set forth by the Local Executive Board as follows: I am the \_\_\_\_ son \_\_\_\_ daughter of a Member, retired Member or deceased Member in good standing of Local 1103 and either:

- (1) \_\_\_\_ A High School senior intending to continue my education at \_\_\_\_\_,
- (2) \_\_\_\_ A College Student entering my \_\_\_\_ year at \_\_\_\_\_.

(Please Note: If your son or daughter is a 1st, 2nd or 3rd year college student and is applying for one of the Thomas J. Wonsor Memorial Scholarship awards, a transcript of last semester's grades must be attached to confirm eligibility.) Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(Scholarship applications must be returned to Local 1103 headquarters no later than May 31, 2009)



**Have a Drug,  
Alcohol or  
Gambling Problem ?**

**Call  
Headquarters  
939-8203 or 8204**

**Ask to be put in  
contact with  
Tom O'Halloran**

  
**All Information  
is Confidential**



**COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA - LOCAL 1103**

(AFFILIATED WITH A.F.L.-C.I.O.-C.L.C.)

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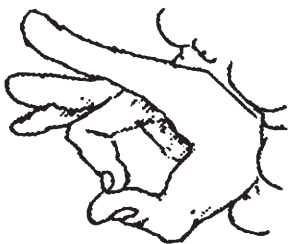


PERIODICAL

# If It's Thursday . . .

THEN YOU MUST BE WEARING RED

IF NOT...



IT'S TIME FOR  
A WAKE UP CALL!



Bargaining a Contract is Never Over.  
It is Always an Ongoing Process Between Agreements.  
Show Your Solidarity Every THURSDAY!