



# THE EAGLE

LOCAL 1103

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April 2012

## It's Your Local... Get Involved !



As you may know, CWA Local 1109 has successfully organized a unit of Cablevision workers in Brooklyn, NY. We credit District 1 VP Chris Shelton, District 1 Organizer Tim Dubnau, President Rolando Scott, EVP Chris Calabrese, the whole 1109 Executive Board, and all of our 1109 Brothers and Sisters from Brooklyn for doing an

incredible job. It is a testament to their hard work and dedication to growing our Union.

CWA Local 1103 has been receiving inquiries and leads from Cablevision techs and others from around the tri-state area. We have to do more; all of us have to do more.

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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

## *It's Time to Educate the Masses about Unions*

In last month's column, I wrote sparingly about the failure of Unions to deliver a message that resonates, which would explain what the Union is and what it can do for workers across the nation and in our communities.

Average people who have had limited, or no exposure to a Union usually reach conclusions pertaining to Unions that are based on misperception, movies, or employer propaganda. You have heard them: Unions are corrupt, Unions only want your money, Unions protect the lazy and unmotivated, Union leaders only care about their friends, Unions cause companies to lose money, and Unions are outdated and therefore aren't needed today.

In some instances, Union Members themselves may have had a bad experience with a Union or a particular representative. In those cases where the bad experience is legitimate, that may justify the resulting distaste for a Union. In other instances, some union Members have an unrealistic expectation of what the Union is and what it should be doing for them. It is when those expectations are not met to their own satisfaction, that they can become soured, but those cases are few and far in between.

It's an odd dichotomy because in one way it makes sense to me that a percentage of Americans do not have love for Unions because of the constant barrage of anti-union talking points delivered by FOX NOISE, CNBC and the like. Also, in grammar schools and high schools across the nation there is almost no education that takes place, which accurately depicts modern day Unions or their mission. (In school, if there was a day or two dedicated to early labor rights or organized labor that would be a lot. Anyone remember Samuel Gompers?) But in another way it makes no sense, because almost every encounter the average citizen has with an emergency service worker, or a provider of everyday services, or a teacher, or a pilot or flight attendant, or a nurse, is with someone belonging to a Union.

So, how could it be that all of these personal experiences and interactions with unionized workers don't correlate to an overall positive attitude towards Unions and workers?

I believe that the answer lies in the fact that for over 30 years the class collaborationists have sold the glories of the free market, and the incompetence of government, and have convinced middle class Americans to be resentful of each other. They don't want there to be any acknowledgement that there is a distinction in class, as long as they remain at the top of the class. They want everyone to believe that we are all in this together, however we are not. They want everyone to believe that class warfare is bad. It's not bad when they have waged war with us, the 99%, for the last 30 years, it's only bad now when the 99% fights back. Then it's bad.

Don't think we have been at the receiving end: How else can you explain that we have been in major wars with no draft, which overwhelmingly shifts the burden of war to the families making up the 99%? How else can you explain that tax rates for investors are lower than it is for workers? How else can you explain that corporations pay

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# THE EAGLE

Proud To Be 1103

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no federal income taxes while our federal taxes must be paid, and the services we depend on are cut to the bone? Why else have we been driven to a national debate about deficits and entitlement reform, but not corporate tax reform? How else can you explain a financial burden shifted off the shoulders of the wealthy and onto the rest of us? How else can you explain Citizen United? How else can you explain the attack on voters who are disproportionately Black and Latino? How else can you explain that American jobs are being shipped overseas, while the companies deporting them still receive our tax dollars?

But we can roll back the tide. We can deliver a message which resonates. We have a story to tell. There is an opportunity today for Unions to be an instrument for change, to be transformational. Every day, Union Members can and do effectuate progressive change in our society. We can, legitimately, make the case that Unions are as important today as they were yesterday.

#### *Where do we start?*

First, we need not apologize for belonging to a Union or being Union. Second, let us proudly define who we are, on our terms.

As a Local, we intend to create and start a Local 1103 "Proud to Be" social media campaign. First, we want to demonstrate who we are, not as workers, but who we are in our communities. That Union Members are coaches, volunteer firefighters, veterans of war, blood donors, Girl Scout leaders, [moms and dads, grandmas and grandpas].

#### *We need your help.*

If you are willing to pass along a photo of yourself doing something outside of work, it will be put together in a promotional video slide show with music. The photos can be anything. It can be you at a ball game with your kids, or at Christmas with your nieces, or coaching a soccer game, or you in a military or firefighter uniform. Anything! The email address for the picture project is: pics1103@hotmail.com .

If this works the way that we envision, we will then move to actual videos with personal testimonies. This isn't necessarily a mobilization activity, but if you're tired of the talking heads on network TV who are doing the dirty work of the

corporate and municipal bosses, then step up to the plate.

Educating the public about who we are and what we stand for is consistent with the mission to re-establish Local 1103 and Union pride.

Finally, On behalf of the Local 1103 Executive Board, I proudly announce that we have hired a new Local Union Organizer. Christina Henry started work on February 21, and immediately was assigned by me to work on our local Cablevision campaign.

You should also know that we have worked out a unique agreement with the Working Families Party. Christina is on loan to us from the Working Families Party for a minimum of four to a maximum of six months. After the 4-6 month period, the Executive Board will assess our progress and decide whether a permanent solution to our Organizing program is required.

The hiring of a full-time organizer, focused on only organizing, is a positive step forward for this Local.

Kevin Sheil,  
President

## **Verizon Layoff Arbitration Case Update:**

**The Company and the Union have agreed to the following schedule for submitting briefs for the layoff arbitration:**

**Initial briefs submitted by May 18th, Reply briefs submitted by June 1st**

**Hopefully a decision will be received by August.**





We are asking our Members that come into contact with a Cablevision worker, to introduce yourself. Let them know you are member of a union and that you belong to CWA Local 1103. Ask them if they have heard of CWA and if they know that Cablevision workers in

Brooklyn chose to go Union. Tell them Brooklyn Cablevision workers will have a much stronger contract if others join the union, too.

It's important that you use your own words.



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Ask them if they are interested in joining the Union. Ask them if they would be interested in speaking to someone who can provide them with information about the Union. Ask them to give you their name and/or number. Write it down and call the Local with it.

If they do not want to provide a name and/or number, always offer them the Local 1103 Union Hall phone number at 914-939-8203, and urge them to call. If you have any questions, please call and ask to speak to Christina Henry.

Most importantly, let them know that all calls and contacts will be kept confidential.

CWA is working on a unified approach to this campaign across the District, so we can work quickly to move the next unit towards victory.







## The Retiree's Corner..

One of the difficult duties we have as RMC officers is finding ways to encourage retiree participation in rallies and demonstrations as we fight to protect our benefits. If we as retirees sit back and rely on others to fight our battles for us there is the very real possibility that one day retirees will go out to their mailboxes and find a bill from Verizon for monthly healthcare premiums. Sound farfetched? Not if you have been keeping up with the company's unrelenting pursuit for benefit givebacks and future healthcare payments in the current contract negotiations with them. This in spite of being a highly profitable company!

We all have lives that pull us in many directions. If we lose our benefits will we still have the resources to continue living those lives as we do now? How many of us will be able to pay more for medical coverage and still meet the many financial and personal obligations that all retirees have?

How do we as CWA 1103 RMC officers inspire our fellow retirees to put their feet to the pavement and stand up to Verizon and remind them we are still here!

We now have a brand new CWA 1103 RMC banner which we are anxious to inaugurate at upcoming rallies in front of Verizon Wireless stores. We need retirees to take time to come out and stand in front of the stores holding our banner and remind Verizon we have not gone away and will not go away! We need to make our presence known! We need to keep our voices loud and unified. Too much is at stake to let up now!

We like to thank all our members who have sent in their 2012 \$20 annual Chapter dues and to those who paid their one-time Council membership fee. Remember your support keeps our chapter growing and keeps our Union strong.

For our members who ask why they must be a Council member in addition to being a chapter member a reminder of what the Retired Members Council is all about.

As Council members, we may be retired but we remain active in the life of our union. Because of the steady erosion in the retirement security of most Americans, we believe it's essential that we actively participate in the struggle to protect our benefits. Through the Council, CWA retirees have input into key retiree programs as they are shaped through contract negotiations and or legislation. The CWA Retired Members' Council works to safeguard and enhance our retirement in many ways by:

- Monitoring company pension and health care policies.
- Tracking national legislation affecting CWA retired members
- Monitoring federal, state and local politicians and legislation in support of our goals and interests.
- Representing retired members' concerns and issues with CWA bargaining councils before and during contract negotiations.

As always we hope you stay abreast of what's going on in our chapter by clicking on the retiree link on the CWA Local 1103 website or by accessing us directly on <http://www.cwalocal1103rmc.org/>

Finally the CWA Local 1103 RMC Daily Evening Drawing has been reinstated and the first evening drawing began on Thursday, March 1st. It's never too late to participate. For a \$40 donation, you chose a (3) three-digit number (ex. 371). If your number (ex. 371) matches the New York State Evening Daily Numbers Drawing that night, you win \$50. This is a major fundraiser for our chapter and we are asking for your support. Send your check, 3 number pick, with an alternate 3 number pick if your first choice has already been selected, a phone number and e-mail address to the Union Hall with "attention RMC" noted on the front of the envelope.

Jeanette Spoor

President CWA 1103 RMC

# WILL DURST

TONE DEAF TIN EARED BORG



There's something about Mitt. And whatever it is, a few folks are definitely allergic. Maybe they sense he has the same connection to humanity that a drive shaft has to bouillabaisse. Could be he's worth more than most small Balkan nations. Might be the Mormon thing or perhaps he just smells odd.

It's almost funny. After crushing Newt Gingrich in Florida, the nomination for the Republican primary race was written off as a done deal with Romney all but handed the crown and the beaucoup bouquets reserved for winners. And by his post election strut, you could tell the candidate thought along similar lines. Not measuring the drapes or anything, but definitely photo shopping names for inclusion on the bottom line of a bumper sticker.

But the express train to the Tampa printers derailed on the winter plains of the Midwestern states of Colorado, Minnesota and Missouri with Rick Santorum somehow swooping down to sweep all three. Having had to slap up a different wannabee front-runner every week, Romney must feel like he's playing Whack a Mole with a mallet made out of yogurt soaked cat hair clippings.

Whatever that something about Mitt is, it causes conservatives to contract the dreaded "Itchy I-Don't-Knows," every time they get close to walking down the aisle with the former governor from Massachusetts. It's a rash that erupts only when Willard's name tops the national polls. A serious knee-buckling case of Buyer's Remorse. Of course the clueless plastic smile of an aged Ken doll hasn't acted as a sufficient antidote either.

The tone deaf man with the tin ear grinningly claimed he was not concerned about "the very poor." As Randy Jackson might say, "A bit pitchy, dawg." The problem is, most normal humans suspect Romney's definition of "very poor" consists of anybody without a pastry chef permanently on call. The very next day, apparently concerned that his post elitist message wasn't being taken seriously he hugged Donald Trump. Which would be terrific if he were running for Poster Child of the 1%.

Someone on his staff has to tell the guy he already resembles a police sketch artist rendering of a white-collar criminal. The MBA voted Most Likely to be Perp-Walked up a Courthouse Steps with a Trench Coat Draped over his Handcuffs. Looks more like Gordon Gekko than Michael Douglas does. Go on Mitt. Say it. "Greed is good." Feel better now?

The only people who can relate to this guy are country club chaps with a penchant for calling their wives "lovey." He wasn't groomed, he was assembled out of an Ikea box. "One White Male Politician; Standard."

Romney won Florida by airing 12,000 ads compared to Gingrich's 300, and doing the same to Rick Santorum should be easier than pudding on a stick, since the former Pennsylvania Senator is financing his campaign mostly through bake sales and scrounging under couch cushions.

Santorum actually brags about running such a low-key campaign he flies middle seats on United. We're supposed to entrust the Presidency to a guy who can't snag a decent travel agent?

Something else about Mitt is he's an absolute blooming chameleon. Over the next couple of weeks, expect to be treated to the Borg Candidate assimilating Santorum's passion for fighting the culture wars with the megaphone turned up to LOUD. Who knows, Mitt could well decide to go all in. And start wearing sweater vests.

# GOP



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## LETTERS TO THE LOCAL

Dear Kevin and my CWA Local 1103 friends,

Thanks for your being a part of my 8th Annual Labor's Agenda function. I truly appreciate the support.

The issues at hand in New York State are difficult and controversial, but we've made some positive strides last year, and I'm hopeful we'll be diligent—and successful—this year. I always value your ideas and opinions.

Best wishes for the coming spring season.

George Lattimer,  
N.Y.S. Assemblyman

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**COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA - LOCAL 1103**

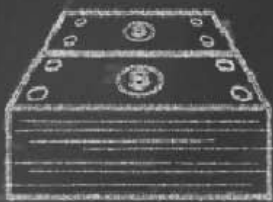
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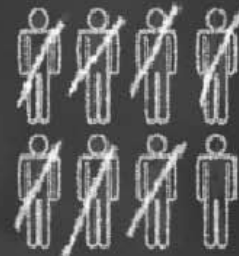
  
**The verigreedy Equation:**



**Make  
Billions**



**Pay  
No Taxes**



**Kill  
Middle Class  
Jobs**