

LOCAL 44 NEWSREEL



VOLUME 16, ISSUE 2

IATSE LOCAL 44

MARCH, 2005

RONNIE CUNNINGHAM
BUSINESS AGENT

ELLIOT JENNINGS
SECRETARY-TREASURER

JACK THOMAS
PRESIDENT

I.A.T.S.E. LOCAL 44 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

March 12, 2005

Time: 9:00 AM

At: The Sportsmen's Lodge,
Empire Room

12833 Ventura Blvd.,
Studio City, Ca 91604

Retiree Info... Pg. 8-9

Academy Awards... Pg. 10

Know Your Rights... Pg. 12

"If life was fair, Elvis would be alive and all the impersonators would be dead."

- Johnny Carson

LOCAL 44 SHOP STEWARDS

CBS Studio Center

Tibor "Ted" Barti
Arthur Eishtadt

CBS Television City

Andrea Joel

Disney Studios

Kenneth Knight

Universal Studios

Michael Cappello
Robert "Inky" Intlekofer
(Property)

Fox Studios

James "Jimmy" Meyer
Bryce Vardanian

Sony Studios

Chic Chaldu

Las Vegas, NV

Bobby Zeletes

Paramount Pictures

Tony Chavez

SAT

Alex Vuckovich

Warner Bros.

Dennis Christensen
Rick Manson (Property)
Gene Owens Jr.
John Petros

"JAG"

Andrew DeMuri

Field Stewards

Ralph Fierro
"Grande" Gonzalez
Jay Hirsch
Charlotte Laughon
Art Piatt
Joe Recchia
David Roesch
Richard Ross
Tomas Sallvin
Randy Severino
Anthony Syracuse
Dennis Ullman
Ken Wilson

Alpha Medical

Alex Hernandez

NEWSREEL SUBMISSIONS

The deadline for the
next issue is:
March 21, 2005

Please be sure your contact
information is clearly marked.

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LOCAL 44

WEBSITE:

www.local44.org

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CONNECTED!**

LOCAL 44 OFFICERS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Officers:

Ronnie Cunningham, Business Agent
Elliot Jennings, Secretary-Treasurer
Jack Thomas, President
Stacey McIntosh, Vice President

Executive Board:

Erin Hennessey, Propmaker Representative
Gene Owens, Propmaker Representative
Armando "Grande" Gonzalez, Propmaker Representative
Peter Angles, Property Representative
Gary Oseransky, Property Representative
Joseph Recchia, Property Representative
Emily Ferry, Property Master Representative
Craig Raiche, Property Master Representative
J.D. Streett, Special Effects Representative
Jeff "JC" Machit, Special Effects Representative
Brenda Meyers-Ballard, Set Decorator Representative
Robinson Royce, Set Decorator Representative
John Matheson, Coordinator Representative
John Samson, Coordinator Representative
Mary Gullickson, Sergeant-At-Arms

Delegates:

Erin Hennessey, Propmaker Delegate
Gary Oseransky, Property Delegate
Craig Raiche, Property Master Delegate
George Paine, Special Effects Delegate
Brenda Meyers-Ballard, Set Decorator Delegate
Barry Kingston, Coordinator Delegate

Trustees:

Bob Carlyle, Trustee
Otto Lungren, Trustee
Jeannie Gunn, Trustee

Executive Board members can be reached by e-mail at
eboard@local44.org

Please note: Armando "Grande" Gonzalez has replaced
Michael Van Dyke as Propmaker Representative,
and Otto Lungren has replaced Mike Clark as Trustee.

"I have never let my schooling interfere with my education. "
-Mark Twain

BUSINESS AGENT'S COLUMN

By Ronnie Cunningham

It has now been several months since the new administration took office. I would like to thank those of you who have called with positive feedback on the direction we have taken the Local so far. The input of the membership is a valued asset, and as we move forward, we will continue to work toward implementing the changes deemed necessary to keep Local 44 heading in the right direction.

In the last issue of the Newsreel, we posted a listing of both non-union and union signatory manufacturing shops. Since the publication of this listing, we have received a number of calls from non-signatory shops requesting meetings to start the process of becoming signatory. The list of non-signatory shops was intended to discourage key personnel from using these shops for manufacturing. For your convenience, the list is posted again on page 13.

Another issue that we are currently focusing on is the increasingly intrusive nature of start-up paperwork. It has come to our attention the members are being asked for highly personal information on new-hire documents. Members with concerns are strongly encouraged to send a blank copy of your start-up packet to the Local, you do not need to include your name, but please include the name of the production, the production company name, and a list of any additional requests that seem out of the ordinary, e.g. requests for bank account information. We intend to pursue this problem with the full force of the Local, but we need your help to do so.

The cooperative meetings between the AMPTP and the IATSE are coming up in mid-April. During these meetings, we will be requesting

the support of the AMPTP for the American Entertainment Armourers Association which has been working diligently to change legislation that makes it more difficult to obtain weaponry for motion pictures in the United States than it is in most other countries. This issue has contributed substantially to the problem of run-away production; because even in countries like Canada, which have



Ronnie Cunningham and Elliot Jennings present retired Coordinator David Kirk (center) with a Gold Card at the Local 44 Retiree's holiday lunch.

stricter gun laws than the United States for its citizens, there are laws in place specific to the film and television industry making it easier to import and purchase weapons for entertainment industry-related projects. Additionally, we will be re-opening discussions regarding contract language requiring prominent placement for the names of Set Decorators in screen credits. We will also request the long-overdue classification of "Special Effects Coordinator or Supervisor."

In late December 2004, Local 44 applied to Contract Services for funding for several industry-specific training programs. The request included

applications for several computer classes that will be open to all crafts, a weapons training program for Property persons and Property Masters, and a comprehensive Prop Shop/Special Effects program for Propmakers and Prop Shop persons. The Contract Services Safety Training Committee will be meeting and making a final decision as to disbursement of funds for these programs in late February.

We will publish a detailed listing of available classes and application information in the next issue of the Newsreel. If you have questions, or would like to put your name on the preliminary interest list, please call 818-769-2500 ext. 120.

Many members have called recently to inquire after Local 44 brother Rocky Gehr. Rocky was seriously injured on the set of *Domino* in late December, 2004, while preparing an air mortar. Co-worker and 44 brothers Mike Wever and Eric Fraizer responded to the accident with on-the-spot first aid until the ambulance crew arrived.

Rocky was hospitalized for several weeks in Las Vegas, before being transported back to Los Angeles. However, the facility he was moved to was quite a distance from Rocky's family so with the active support of Local 44, Rocky has been relocated to St. Josephs Providence Hospital in Burbank where he is in serious condition.

If you would like to send cards or letters of support to Rocky or his family, please address them to Rocky Gehr, c/o Local 44, 12021 Riverside Drive, North Hollywood, CA 91607 and we will forward them on.

Financial Report 2005:

WE SPENT MORE THAN WE HAD

By Elliot Jennings

The conductor fell asleep at the wheel and the train is coming up fast on a dangerous curve. Someone manages to engage the brakes, sparks fly off the tracks, but will the train's momentum be slowed enough to make the turn?

Four months ago this current administration took over the reins of Local 44. From the information I had obtained over the last few years, I knew that there would be substantial work in my end of the Local, the Business Office. In fact, what I had perceived as the Local's poor financial operation was the genesis of my desire to run for office.

On occasion people have accused me, when I make these statements, of bashing the integrity of my predecessor. This has never been my intent. It is entirely possible to have a person who you respect and yet whose capabilities are not best suited for a particular job. The duties and responsibilities of the financial side of the Union are more involved than people understand; it is long removed from the days of smiling at a member while taking their dues, stamping their book, and writing the amount in a ledger.

Mismanagement does not have to be come from willful malice; it can be a result of ignorance, indifference or inability. "We've always done it this way and we've never had problems before". There's still miles of straight track, throw in some more coal!

One of the first things I wanted to assess was the financial health of the Local. I requested our Local's CPA to give me his insights into the operation of the Union. He had been there for years; could he give me a quick review?

Deficit Spending

The accountant's frankness about the lack of financial oversight was sur-

prising. He provided me with a ten-year run of Local 44's revenues and expenses. Only once since 1998 have we brought in more money than we have spent. The Local's losses have averaged in the hundreds of thousands a year over that time.

The information provided by the Investment Broker of the Union was even more unsettling. Though our investments had averaged a conservative return of 7-8% over the past decade, our portfolio was being depleted. From 1999 until last year our investment funds had gone from over \$4.5 million to around \$2 million. Though we've been making money on our investments, we have been liquidating our assets. In 2004 alone, this Local spent \$560,000 more than it took in (with depreciation, the number grows to over \$700,000).

In November 2004, I invited the Local's CPA and Investment Broker to address the E-Board. Both men announced that the Local's finances would be looking at dramatic problems in a couple years if corrective measures weren't taken. How did we get to this point?

With no real financial or business foundation, the overseeing officers never considered working from a budget; things were fine they were told. Why? The Local had money in the investment accounts, and we were bringing in plenty of new initiates to cover the bills.

Years earlier, I inquired, "Was it true the Union had to initiate new members every year in order to balance its books?" Yes! 200 to 250 new members were needed each year to pay the bills. For years this Local ran flush with new initiations. 1,100 members joined in 1996, and for several years thereafter we averaged nearly 400 a year. The Local spent and made deci-



sions as though this trend would always remain. It hasn't; the last three years we have had 202, 134 and 139 new members. But the Local's spending has continued to increase.

The train is out of control; grab the brake!

To the credit of *this* Executive Board, when they were made aware of the condition, they rallied to correct the problem, despite the politically difficult and unpopular nature of the decisions they would have to make. Not wanting to be an alarmist, I have been cautious in presenting the situation until I could verify all the facts.

We identified several reasons for the Local's condition. Unrestrained spending (the need for a budget), overstaffing, undercharging members, subsidizing required per capita payments, benefit programs over and above our ability to fund them, and the lack of knowledge that any of them existed.

Overstaffing: I had pledged to address this in my campaign. To date, in the Secretarial side of the office, three positions have been eliminated; three other individuals took pay reductions, saving the Local nearly \$165,000 a year. On the Business Agent's side, the two new Assistant B.A.s combined, are making \$35,000 less than their predecessors.

Back Dues: There was almost no effort put into tracking down members who owed the Local back dues. Many members were working who hadn't paid their obligations to the Union in years. We took an aggressive approach with these individuals. As of the end of last year, with the combined effort of the Business Agents and the Secretary-Treasurer's office we brought in over \$280,000 in back dues,

and there is still more out there. Had we not, the deficit would have been higher!

Under-collecting: We are under-collecting the financial obligation from our members. Our dues are tied directly to the Basic Agreement pay scale, and our CBLs. We are required to collect dues at a certain rate. For years members were given a “dues reduction” or “freeze”; politically popular, economically disastrous. Over the last ten years, we have under-collected over \$4 Million. What was a solution? Collect the full obligation of members. No one likes a hike in their bills, but the amount is minor. Local 44 charges its members one of the lowest dues rates in the Hollywood IA. It amounts to two 8-hour days a year.

Per Capita Shortfall: The biggest portion of the financial hit is the result of the subsidized per capita. Per capita is a tax the Union pays on every current member on its rolls each year. In 2004, we paid around \$175 a year for each member out of the Union coffers. We have undercharged the full per capita for years! The net loss to the Union is around \$400,000 each year. We pay it whether we collect it or not. Over the last ten years, that’s another \$4 Million.

Local 44 covers a portion of each member’s per capita payment. To working and Inactive members it amounts to around \$70 per year; for a Retiree, the figure was \$135 per year. How do we correct it?

The Executive Board felt to collect the full obligation all at once would be too big a hit, so they decided to ease the shortfall into our payments. Regular members will bring their per capita payments up to the correct amount over the next 3 years, reducing the Local’s debt by nearly \$300,000.

Retiree Increase: This year we asked Retirees who wished to vote to pay an extra \$10 of their required per capita per quarter,

reducing the subsidy paid by the Local to \$95 per year. One of the big lies is that the Executive Board was “out to get” the Retirees. Untrue. When it comes to per capita tax collection, with our Active members we short the Local on the use of some funds, with Retirees we don’t even break even.

We have created many benefit programs for our members: the Picnic, disability dues payments for injured members, life insurance coverage, and medical co-pays for Retirees and social events. These are programs I believe a Union should provide, and something we all want to keep. The Union should be more than a collection agency. The Union should provide social services. The problem is we haven’t ever considered how we are funding what we provide, or if there are alternative methods to pay for them. In January this year, the Executive Board met in an attempt to hash out the Local’s first ever annual budget.

We are trying to run the operation

of this Local on the dues payments alone, and pay for the social programs on the initiation fees.

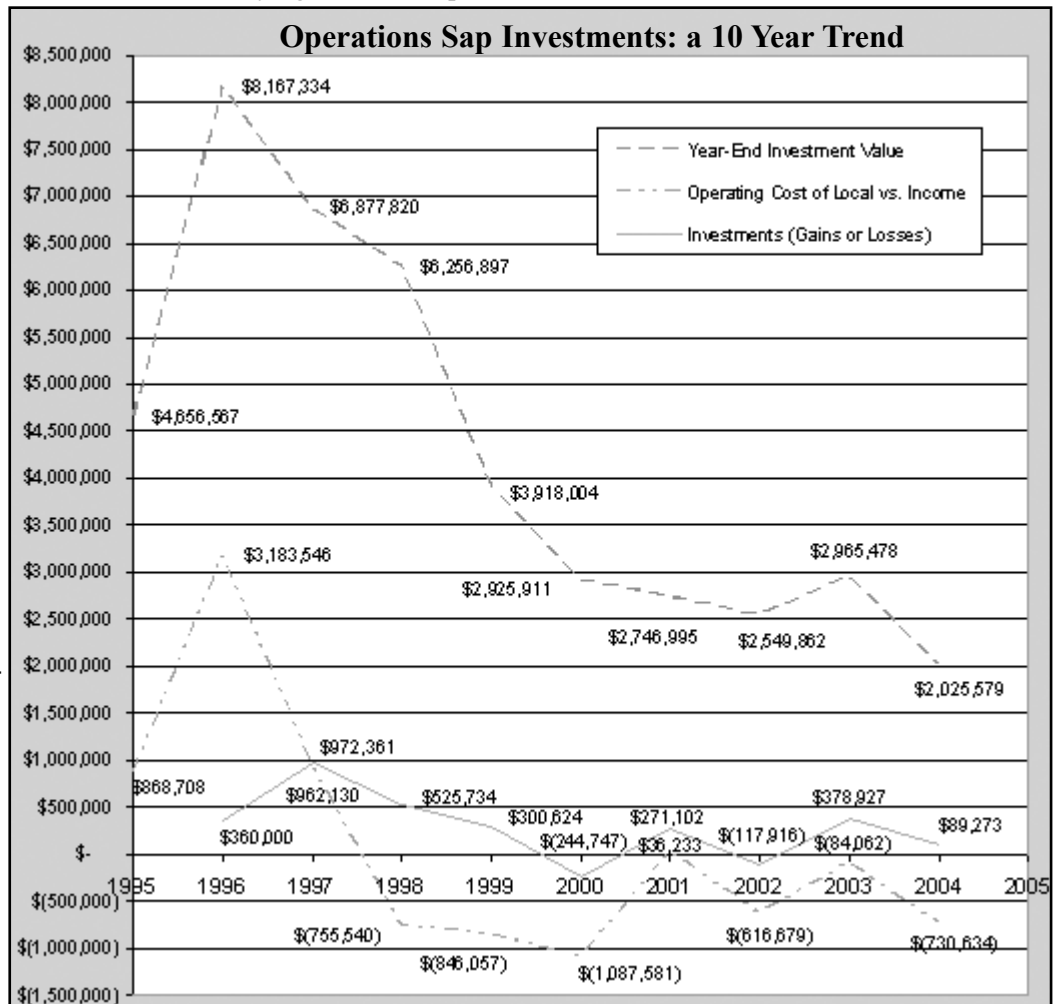
The brakes are pulled, the sparks are flying, we believe the train can make the curve.

If you wish to hear more, attend the General Membership meeting March 12.

**LOCAL 44
OFFICE HOURS**

**CALL BOARD:
5:30 AM - 8:00 PM**

**BUSINESS OFFICE:
8:00 AM - 6:00 PM**



STRAIGHT TIME

By Craig Raiche

Firstly, on the subject of supporting IA signator shops, I'd like to clarify something I said in our last NEWSREEL issue (Feb. '05). Local 44 will begin filing charges against any member who MANUFACTURES a prop in a non-IA shop. Prop RENTALS and prop PURCHASES aren't affected. In that same issue, I wrote: "I claim no exclusivity to The Masters Corner. This is your space, too. If you have an entire article or just one comment or question that is specific to Prop Masters, please, submit it to the local." The offer stands. In as much, however, as our newsletter offered no regular submissions from any other craft, and as "The Masters Corner" regularly offered information that was pertinent to all other crafts, I've moved to this new "corner."

Some members working under the Commercial Agreement (especially Set Decorators and Property Masters) have found their work increasingly usurped by Production Designers. If you too, have been victimized or exploited by a Production Designer (or any other craft, for that matter) please relay your concern to our B.A., Ronnie Cunningham. Failure to alert us to any possible jurisdictional or contractual violation may lead to even more frequent occurrences.

Special Effects craft representatives have long petitioned Producers for recognition of a Special Effects "Supervisor" category. In conjunction with our Business Agent, current craft reps, "JC" Machit and J.D. Streett, have re-opened discussions with AMPTP Vice President, Carol Lombardini, in the hope of achieving such recognition. (Good luck, gentlemen.)

Prior to employment on your next project, you'll be required to fill out yet another packet of "start paperwork." Today, start paperwork is so complex that some members seek their attorneys review and advice before signing it. It also seems that each new employer requires a bit more personal information than the last - even as they try to assign us a greater degree of personal liability than the last. We'd like to prevent this situation from getting any worse. Whenever you begin work on a new production, please, request a complete "2nd packet"

of start paperwork and send it (blank, of course) to our business office, where it will be forwarded to our legal counsel who will review the documents and, eventually, suggest a plan to address these and other start paperwork concerns such as identity theft. Thank you.

Local 44's "supervising crafts" are: Set Decorators, Special Effects Persons, Construction Coordinators and Property Masters. Almost all of their respective duties and responsibilities were established decades ago. While gray areas do surface on occasion, there is one particular "set-in-stone" truth that has never been questioned: After the camera has rolled its first "take," supervision of the shooting set is maintained by the Property Master.

Lest there be any doubt in the minds of Set Dressers Assigned to the Set (a.k.a. "On-Set Dressers"), I offer their duties and responsibilities as specified in our Local 44 Members Kit. They are: To represent the Set Decoration Department during actual shooting; to photograph or verify that reference photos are taken (for re-dressing purposes); to ensure that all set dressing pieces are properly dressed and/or re-dressed; to notify the Lead Person of schedule changes or additional shooting (which may necessitate some manner of re-dress); to protect the set from unnecessary accidents as might be caused by food or drink; to cover set dressing pieces (for added protection when not being filmed); to ensure continuity by placing "Hot Set" signs wherever appropriate; to lock up valuable set pieces when "wrap" is called; to carry such tools as are contractually required for all other property persons; and - to work under the supervision of the Property Master.

Property Masters should willingly assume more than just a casual role in the hiring of any On-Set Dresser. It is definitely in your own best interest to do so. Please, exercise your supervision in a wise and judicious manner. Be ever mindful that On-Set Dressers have an equally important job to do. Call them into your service only when it is absolutely necessary - but never before they've had time to properly complete their duties as specified above. They are a valuable asset to both Set Decorator and Property Master. The



job is a wonderful blend of both worlds (and, personally, I think it's the best gig in L.44).

Every one of us, no matter our position or craft, are quick to explain, "I'm only as good as the information I get." Well, like each of us, Local 44 is only as good as the information IT gets. Please, act responsibly and update your current contact info. Make an effort to promptly let our call-board know whenever you're laid off or newly hired again. And, please, do use our call-board to check the current status of your preferential hires. These simple, but courteous, acts will result in increased efficiency and better service for all.

Thank you for reading.
Stay Tuned & Stay Interested,
Craig Raiche

A MOB HIT ON A&E

from USA Today 2/1/2005
By Gary Levin

The Sopranos are making big money, but this time it's legal. HBO sold 78 episodes of the Mob hit Monday to basic cable's A&E network for \$2.5 million apiece, a record for reruns.

A&E will begin airing *The Sopranos* during prime time in fall 2006, once the sixth and final season (which might expand from 10 to 13 episodes ends its HBO run.

Like *Sex and the City*, which now airs on TBS, *The Sopranos* filmed alternate scenes that tone down the language, nudity and violence. But A&E also is considering a more explicit version of the series for late night.

A&E, once known for highbrow arts programming saw rating plummet when it lost *Law & Order* in 2002. But it has made gains among younger viewers with reality programming (*Growing up Gotti*). *The Sopranos* will join *CSI: Miami* and 24 on its lineup.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Jack Thomas

Brothers and Sisters,

Your Craft Representatives and the officers of Local 44 have been addressing many immediate problems since being sworn in last September 30th. The first operating budget this local has ever had is almost complete as I write this, and other pressing problems have been dealt with as well. With the good of our local in mind, we now have to look a bit past the present and deal with things that will have a negative impact in the future if we fail to act on them soon.

What should we address first? That's easy to figure out. What was our Local's biggest foul-up of 2004? What was our Local's biggest unnecessary expense of 2004? I'll give you a couple of hints... they took at least four months too long to get done and cost just a shade less than I once paid for a house. Right – our elections. With a price tag of more than \$200,000, the cost per member was about \$40 each. I want to make certain that we do not ever have to endure an ordeal or absorb a financial hit like this again.

How do we fix this so it cannot happen again? We have to go through the process of changing our Constitution and Bylaws. Thanks to Emily Ferry and others, this was started years ago, and Article 9 has been rewritten along with

revisions to Articles 1 through 5. The rewrite of Article 9 covering the election procedures was approved by the previous Board and had a nod of approval from Mr. Levy, our labor attorney. It was supposed to have gone to the International's office for their approval before the last elections, but never made it, so we were stuck with the old procedures for the last general election.

Because of the fouled up elections, this administration now has a more complex problem to deal with than the last one. Our Constitution and Bylaws have to be in compliance with three greater sets of rules, Federal law, California law, and the Constitution and Bylaws of the IA. Our Constitution and Bylaws have set times for elections to be held with the thought in mind that they happen when the greatest member participation can be expected. It also gives us time frames for holding our general membership meeting and craft meetings every year. Past practice has been to reschedule or even cancel meetings during elections to prevent them from being used as a campaign arena. This may or may not be a valid practice, but I do feel we should not diminish the contact the members have with their elected officers and representatives simply because we are in the middle of the election process.



We see enough rough scheduling at work – why should we do it to ourselves, on our own time? Then, as if there weren't enough conflicts, the International's Constitution and Bylaws tell us that our officers' terms are to be three years. This means the current officers should serve until September 30, 2007, months after our next elections would be completed if they are held as they are currently scheduled, and any losing incumbents would be long-term lame ducks.

So what do we do about this situation to make us - the members - happy and in compliance with all the rules we are obligated to follow? One scenario that fits would be: as part of the rewrite of Article 9, we would move our election process so it begins in May and is completed by the end of August or middle of September at the latest. This could work because the studios are moving

steadily toward year-round operation. By 2007, the television "season" as we have known it will most likely be a fading memory so scheduling the elections to maximize member participation will no longer be an issue. We can then follow our own rules and have all our meetings when we are supposed to, comply with the International's rule on the term of office, prevent lame-duck officers from staying on after they have worn out the members' welcome, and at the same time, get our new procedures in place to prevent ever having another nightmare like last year's elections. Is there a down side to this? Not in my opinion. I will be happy to hear your views on this and other issues at hand on March 12th at the General Membership Meeting.

ANOTHER GOOD REASON TO STAY CURRENT ON YOUR DUES

Effective March 31, 2005: if you become suspended (that is, you are one quarter late in payments), you lose your Life Insurance. So, stay in good standing and you'll stay covered by Local 44's life insurance policy.

2005 DUES SCHEDULE

CRAFT	QUARTERLY	QUARTERLY INACTIVE	ANNUALLY	ANNUALLY INACTIVE
Property / Greens	\$137.00	\$82.00	\$548.00	\$328.00
Propmakers, Drapers, Sewers, Upholsterers, Special FX	\$145.00	\$85.00	\$580.00	\$340.00
Prop Masters	\$160.00	\$93.00	\$640.00	\$372.00
Coordinators	\$174.00	\$100.00	\$696.00	\$400.00
Set Decorators	\$178.00	\$102.00	\$712.00	\$408.00
Inactive Retiree	n/a	\$20	n/a	\$80
Retired	n/a	Free	n/a	Free

FIXING THE RETIREE DILEMMA

By Elliot Jennings

The Executive Board has taken heat in the past couple of months over the Retirees situation. Most of this has occurred from those who are ill-informed, or from those who have intentionally fed our Retired brethren and others misinformation for political gain.

As a way of explaining the situation (again), in hopes of shedding light on the subject, and to update members on the progress in resolving the conflict, here is the following report.

The Executive Board which took office September 30, 2004, was comprised of a majority of new Officers. They were determined to start following the Constitution and By-Laws as they were written! Part of this decision affected the financial collections of the Local, and as a consequence the Retirees.

The Constitution has clearly defined rules to be considered Retired. The rules in the Constitution *cannot be changed* without an amendment passed by 2/3rds of the voting membership, and the approval of the International!

Several years ago an amended category was created (without International or membership approval) to allow Retired members to vote. However, the IA requires each *voting* member to pay a per capita tax to the International.

The "created" Retiree category was set at only \$10 a quarter. The International currently charges \$40 a quarter in per capita tax (\$160 a year). The Local pays the International the difference not paid by the Retirees.

Later the age requirement for this special category was lowered to 62 years of age to accommodate changes in the pension and Social Security areas (a practical thought but, again without International or membership approval). These undocumented, unapproved changes made it unclear as to exactly when someone was truly retired, how much they had to pay, or even if they had to pay.

Unjust, Unconstitutional, and Unclear

The current Executive Board found itself in a quandary: saddled with past practices that were unconstitutional and unjust; by following the rules and laws to which we are all bound as Union members, the Executive Board had to undo improper procedures from the past. Not that they desired to; they were obligated to!

The Constitution and By-Laws had only three legitimate categories for members; Active, Inactive, or Retired. Retired members have no vote (by International rules). Therefore Local 44's voting "Retirees" are considered Inactive members. We cannot "legally" create a special category just because we want to; an addition has to go through the amendment process. The new Executive Board did not change the rules, it started following the rules!

Upon discovering these conflicts, the Executive Board set out to fix the problem by going through the proper procedures. The Executive Board *can make amendments* to the *By-Law* portion of the CBLs; to "fill in the blanks" of missing areas or clarify those that are unclear in the Constitution.

The process requires discussion and debate for at least two

Executive Board meetings before passing an amendment and it still requires the International's approval.

On January 19th, 2005, after several E-Board discussions, with input by Retirees and their advocates, with review by our attorney, the E-Board approved and sent to the International in New York **proposed** By-Law amendments, which appear on the following page (pg. 9).

Much rumor has been spread that this Executive Board was out to "take things away" or "take the vote" from the Retirees. This is a ridiculous fabrication. Most of the members on this Board are in their late 40s or 50s; five of the members are over 60. To think that there is some sort of vendetta against a group to which most of the members will belong in a decade or less is a foolish notion at best. However, we can't hide our heads in the sand and pretend we didn't have a situation that was wrong.

Another inappropriate past practice was charging the Retirees in order to receive their benefits. This was an unjust practice. Retiree benefits cannot be tied to the voting privilege. Choose to vote or not a Retiree will receive any of the benefits provided by the Local.

One insinuation is that this Board is making the price too high for Retirees on fixed incomes. Most Retirees are not aware of the direct cost the Local incurs for the benefits we provide; for medical co-pay reimbursements we pay out around \$200 a year per Retiree (for some of course, it is much more); for life insurance coverage (at the current level) \$320 a year per Retiree; the subsidized per capita amounts to \$95 a year; and this is without including the costs of the events we sponsor for Retirees. The average pay-back to a Retiree is over \$600 per year in direct benefits (not including events) for a cost presently of \$80 a year.

To accuse the Executive Board of being miserly in regard to its Retiree group is simply a falsehood.

The following greens shop was inadvertently left off of last month's Signatory Shop List:

TAKE 1 MOTION PICTURE PLANT RENTALS, INC.

661-251-8923 Fax 661-251-6486

10150 Foothill Blvd.

Lake View Terrace, CA. 91342

CONTACT: Steve Borgese

Plant Rentals

www.Take1greens.com

Be sure to visit Take 1 for all of your plant rental needs.

PROPOSED BY-LAW AMENDMENTS

Understand these have not yet been approved by the International!

Article Three. **Financial Obligation-Non-Payment Suspension and Expulsion**

Section 13. Retired Member. (This group is already in the CBLs)

As defined in the Constitution: a member who is at least 65 years of age, and who has at least 25 years in the Alliance, and is collecting a pension, and who has had their name removed from the Industry Experience Roster¹, shall be considered a Retired Member.

In addition, a Retired Member shall be required to fill out the appropriate application form to be filed with the International² in order to obtain Retired classification.

A Retired Member shall receive free dues from the Local¹. The Local shall pay the Retired Member's per capita due the International², up to one half the lowest hourly craft rate, as determined by the Basic Agreement each January 1st. A Retired Member shall remit to the Local, on a quarterly basis, any amount in excess of the aforementioned rate.

A Retired Member shall have voice but no vote at union meetings, shall not be entitled to vote on contracts or vote in a Local election², and are not eligible to hold any office.

¹Local 44 Constitution; Article Five, Financial Obligations; Section 1 Dues; Paragraph 2.

²International Constitution; Article Fourteen, Revenues; Section 1A, Reduced Per Capita Tax for "Retired Members", Paragraph 1.

Section 14. Voting Retiree.

A Voting Retiree is a member who is at least 65 years of age, and who has at least 20 years in the Local, and is collecting a pension, and has not had their name removed from the Industry Experience Roster¹.

A Voting Retiree shall receive free dues from the Local, however in order to vote, the Voting Retiree must pay the per capita tax due the International² as determined on January 1st each year, and paid in quarterly payments.

As of January 1, 2005, Retirees shall pay \$20 per quarter of the International per capita; the Local shall pay the remaining portion.

As of January 1, 2006, Retirees shall pay \$30 per quarter of the International per capita; the Local shall pay the remaining portion.

As of January 1, 2007, Retirees shall pay \$40 per quarter of the International per capita; the Local shall pay the remaining portion.

As of January 1, 2008, Retirees shall pay the full quarterly per capita due the International.

A Voting Retiree shall have the right to run for and hold the elected Local offices of Vice-President, Sergeant-At-Arms, or Trustee³.

A Voting Retiree shall be treated and shall have all other rights and conditions, not otherwise delineated, afforded an Inactive Member.

¹International Constitution; Article Nineteen, Powers and Duties of Local Unions; Section 12, Financial Obligations; Paragraph 1.

²International Constitution; Article Fourteen, Revenues; Section 1, Per Capita Tax;

Paragraph 2.

³Local 44 Constitution; Article Six, Officers; Section 2, May Hold Only One Office.

Section 15. Pensioner.

An Inactive member who has not yet attained the age of 65 years old, and who has at least 20 years in the Local, and is collecting a "full, unreduced" pension benefit from the Motion Picture Pension Plan, shall be classified as a Pensioner.

A Pensioner shall pay ½ of one hour of the Local's lowest hourly craft rate, as determined by the Basic Agreement, as dues and; shall pay the full per capita payments (calculated to each individual member) charged to the Local by all organizations it is affiliated with, as determined on January 1st of each year, and paid in quarterly payments¹. The total quarterly payment obligation shall be rounded to the next higher dollar amount.

The Pensioner quarterly payment may not exceed the Local's lowest paying craft's Inactive quarterly payment².

If a member had at least 20 years in the Local, and was at least 62 years of age by December 31, 2004, they may pay the Voting Retiree Rate beginning the first quarterly payment due after acceptance of this amendment.

A Pensioner shall have all the rights and conditions afforded an Inactive Member.

¹International Constitution; Article Nineteen, Powers and Duties of Local Unions; Section 14, Quarterly Dues.

²Local 44 Constitution; Article Five, Financial Obligations; Section 1, Dues; Paragraph 4.

Section 16. Reduced Active Member

A member who is at least 65 years of age, and has at least 20 years in the Local, and is collecting a pension, and has not had their name removed from the Industry Experience Roster, and who is allowed a reduced work schedule without disrupting their retirement benefits (in 2005 set at 39 ½ hours per month), shall be considered a Reduced Active Member.

A Reduced Active Member shall pay, as his/her obligation to the Local, one hour of their craft's lowest hourly rate, as determined in the Basic Agreement on January 1st of each year, as dues and; shall pay the full per capita payments (calculated to each individual member) charged to the Local by all organizations it is affiliated with, as calculated on January 1st of each year, and paid in quarterly payments¹. The total quarterly payment obligation shall be rounded to the next higher dollar amount.

A Reduced Active Member shall be treated and shall have all other rights and conditions, not otherwise delineated, afforded to an Inactive Member.

¹International Constitution; Article Nineteen, Powers and Duties of Local Unions; Section 14, Quarterly Dues.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE LOCAL 44 CHARMED CREW ON 150 EPISODES!

Back Row: *Robinson Royce, Art DeLos Santos (labor), Francisco Reynosa (labor), Star Fields, Dirk Dugan, Nils Carson*

Middle Row: *Rick Myers, Gene Bowen, Michael Zufelt, Roger Montesano, Vince Borgese, Jeff Angelo*

Front Row: *Eric James Lozano, Robert Tupta, Bruce Knechtges, Dave Malooly, Steve Gold, Mike Arbogast, Scott Cockerell, Michael V. Maurice*

JOHN FRAZIER: SPECIAL EFFECTS GOLD

Being nominated for an Oscar is nothing new for Local 44 Special Effects veteran John Frazier, who recently received his sixth Academy nom for *Spiderman 2*; but he is still surprised when it happens. "When I got my first nomination for *Twister* [1996] I thought that was it, I figured I wouldn't see it again." A modest Frazier attributes his success to "being at the right place at the right time." But anyone who has seen *Spiderman 2* can sense just how much work goes into making something look so effortless.

Like most special effects movies these days, *Spiderman 2* was a marriage of mechanical and digital effects. "A lot of Special Effects work now is doing 'elements' for the digital guys," explains Frazier. "For example, we have to make it look like a body is hitting a car, without the actor. We have to add rain, smoke, and other atmospheric elements around a digital Spiderman; and we're constantly asking ourselves, 'Is that would it would really look like?'" In *Spiderman 2*, the answer is a definitive yes. The seamless combination of digital and mechanical effects contributed greatly to the success of the film. "In so many movies, it is obvious when it switches to digital," said Frazier, "when you can successfully blend the two, it makes

you proud of both elements – the goal is to not be able to tell where the live stuff ends and the digital begins, and I think we got that on *Spiderman 2*."



For all the recent advancements in digital effects, some things just look better the old fashioned way. The scene in which Doc Ock throws a car through a deli window was a particular challenge for Frazier and his crew. "Safety is always an issue when you're working with live actors. We fired a car through the window of the deli at sixty miles an hour using an air cannon that we used in *Pearl Harbor* to fire planes. Mary Jane and Peter Parker were added in digitally, but we had live extras playing the waitress and cook in the background. Getting the car to clear the path and not go through any walls [or actors] was an accomplishment. There was no room for error."

Another challenge for Frazier was the second pier sequence, in which everything in a massive room is sucked into Doc Ock's "fusion machine." "We made the entire room out of rubber with steel inside, so we could pull the live-action props down wires, past the actors, and into the 'machine,'" explains Frazier.

Frazier attributes his ability to make the effects "bigger and better" on each movie he does, to his hardworking crew. "I couldn't do it without Jim Schwalm, David Amborn and my whole team." Frazier also credits Mark Noel and his crew, who worked with Frazier, and built the rig that allowed Alfred Molina to move so convincingly as Doc Ock.

After two BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television Arts) awards and four nominations, two Clio awards for commercials, and now a sixth Oscar nod, Frazier maintains that it's an honor just to be nominated, "I know it sounds cliché – but it's really the nomination that counts to me. In our category, it's our peers who get us here, and to be voted in by your peers is just great. Also, taking my family to these awards shows is a thrill, because they're the ones who have been with me for the whole ride." And as Frazier puts it, "It's been quite a ride"

CONGRATULATIONS TO LOCAL 44'S 2004 ACADEMY AWARD NOMINEES

CHERYL CARASIK - SET DECORATION

For *Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events*

This is Cheryl's fourth nomination. Her credits include: *Hulk*, *Men in Black* (nominated 1997), *Men in Black II*, *Wild Wild West*, *The Birdcage* (nominated 1996), *A Little Princess* (nominated 1995), *Wyatt Earp*, and *Edward Scissorhands*

JOHN FRAZIER - VISUAL EFFECTS

For *Spider-Man 2*

This is John's sixth nomination. His credits include *Spiderman* (nominated 2003) *Pearl Harbor* (nominated 2001), *The Perfect Storm* (nominated 2000), *Armageddon* (nominated 1998), *Castaway*, *Twister* (nominated 1996), *Outbreak*, and *Speed*

FRANCESCA LO SCHIAVO - SET DECORATION

For *The Aviator*

This is Francesca's sixth nomination. Her credits include: *Cold Mountain*, *Gangs of New York* (nominated 2002), *Kundun* (nominated 1997), *Interview with the Vampire* (nominated 1994), *Hamlet* (nominated 1990), and *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* (nominated 1989)

LETTERS TO THE LOCAL

The viewpoints of the individual members expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of Local 44, its officers or staff.

Dear Newsreel:

By the time this letter goes to print, Armando "Grande" Gonzalez and I have had the opportunity to meet many of our fellow 44 members in an attempt to gather about 550 signatures for a petition endorsing the "301a petition" trade remedy. But for the members of Local 44 that we did not get a chance to meet, let me give a brief rundown of what causes runaway production and the solution.

THE PROBLEM: Back in 1998, in an effort to attract film and television production, Canada began offering generous subsidies that help reduce labor costs and overall production costs. Unfortunately, they were so successful that nineteen countries around the world copied their business model and effectively underbid them. Thus, began the "race to the bottom". In January 2005, in response to their own runaway production problem, Canadian provinces have leapfrogged each other's tax incentives to foreign and domestic producers: Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia have each recently doubled their incentive rates. As a direct consequence of these distorting subsidies, U.S. film and television workers have been losing their jobs to subsidized workers in foreign countries. It's obvious to film workers both here and in Canada that the studios are pitting the different jurisdictions against each other as a way to get bigger and bigger subsidies.

THE SOLUTION: Realistically, none of our states or our federal government can come close to matching the generous and ever-increasing amounts of money countries like Canada and Australia are giving away. It is very clear that we need to specifically address the problems that these unfair subsidies cause. The Film and Television Action Committee (FTAC), a coalition of individuals and organizations fighting runaway production, sees the solution in fighting unfair trade practices.

FTAC has engaged prominent Washington, DC trade attorneys — The Law Offices of Stewart and Stewart — who believe these trade subsidies violate our trade agreements, specifically the agreement that established that the World Trade Organization (WTO). WTO members are prohibited from having any subsidies that harm the interests of its other members. The Law Offices of Stewart and Stewart have recommended we file a petition of complaint with the U.S. Trade Representative under section 301(a) of the trade act of 1974, the mechanism by which the U.S. protects its trading rights. It is routinely used by all kinds of American businesses and industries. The studios have successfully used the 301(a) many times to fight piracy issues all over the world and have many cases pending now.

Filing this complaint is expensive: the initial filing fee costs \$250,000.00. Teamsters Local 399 has already donated \$50,000.00 to put the grievance together. If this issue is contested, the fee could be as high as \$950,000.00. Once underway, the process should take about 4 to 7 months to run its course.

WHAT WE CAN DO: What I'm asking for is that our union should establish a one time assessment to the mem-

bers' dues of \$10.00 per person for the initial filing fee of the 301(a), to be voted on at our General Membership meeting on March 12, 2005. This money would be earmarked for our legal fees in its own separate account. Elliot Jennings, our Secretary Treasurer, would monitor the account until such time when all of our resources from our other West Coast Locals in the industry procure their parts of the legal fees. The other Locals in the industry who are currently involved in this matter include the Plasterers, Camera, Teamsters, Laborers, SAG, etc. We need each other to make this happen. We need a Quorum to vote this in. Too long have we griped about this problem and done nothing. We have a lot of new officers and E-board members who are very pro-labor and who are progressive in their thinking. It's a new day so let's start off strong.

I also urge all Local 44 members and their families to attend the Tuesday, March 15, 2005 Burbank City Council Meeting (5:30 PM, Burbank City Hall, 275 East Olive Avenue). The City Council will be voting on a resolution to support the filing of the 301(a) Petition. Show your support for the fight against runaway production!
Joe Livolsi, Propmaker, Local 44

FAMILY PRIDE



Local 44 Property Person Randy Severino and his wife Xinna are proud to announce the birth of their son Francesco Severino on Nov 22, 2004 at 8:20pm. He was 9 lbs 7oz., and 22 inches long. Mother and Baby are doing very well. This is a photo of Frankie when he was only 13 days old, on his first Christmas.



Jeff Young, Local 44 Propmaker and his wife Eliana Young welcome their daughter Raquel Souza Young into the world. She was born on September 3rd, 2004, weighing 5 lbs. 14oz., and has grown very fast.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

CONTRACTS

You have a contractual right to know what contract you are working under and to have a copy of that contract for each job on which you work.

When you sign a deal memo to start a new job, ask for a copy of the actual contract that covers that specific show. It is the producer's duty to supply the contract.

In most contracts that the IATSE International negotiates, there is language intended to give members knowledge of that contract.

For instance, this is what one recent low-budget contract says: "Producer shall inform all current and prospective covered employees of the terms and conditions applicable to the Film and shall provide each Employee with a copy of this Agreement, with an acknowledgment of receipt. Prospective covered employees are free to accept or refuse a call to work on this Film and any refusal to accept a call shall not count as a refusal under the roster removal provisions of paragraph 68(c) of the applicable West Coast Studio Local Agreements. Failure to provide any covered employee with a copy of this Agreement shall nullify the special conditions of this Agreement as to that employee and Producer shall be bound by all the terms and conditions of the Basic Agreement and the applicable West Coast Studio Local Agreements as to that employee on all work performed on the Film."

"DIRECT DEALING" IS UNLAWFUL

Many members of Local 44 have reported to the Local's Officers that they have been either "asked" or, more often "required" to waive certain terms and conditions of employ-

ment established in our Collective Bargaining Agreement if they want to go to work. We are disturbed by these reports and believe that the members of Local 44 should know their legal rights when it comes to this issue.

First, federal labor law prohibits employers from trying to unilaterally modify or ignore the terms and conditions of any bargaining agreement the employer has signed onto. This means that a signatory producer may not decide to, for instance, simply ignore certain parts of our Agreement. If a producer does not comply with our Agreement it is most likely a grievance and the matter should be immediately brought to the attention of Local 44.

Next, some producers also try to get our members to agree to forego certain protections and conditions of employment that have been painstakingly negotiated into our Agreement. When an employer tries to directly negotiate with its employees, and those employees are represented by a union, it is what the law calls "direct dealing."

It is a violation of federal labor law (the National Labor Relations Act) for an employer to demand, or even request, that any union-represented employee independently negotiate with the employer over the employee's wages and conditions of employment. In fact, unless permitted in a collective bargaining agreement (like our "better terms of employment" language) an employer commits an unfair labor practice when it seeks to negotiate directly with its union-represented employees and bypasses the union entirely.

It is only through aggressive enforcement of our rights that we can bring the producers back into line and make them comply with the law. If you are being pressured by a producer

to waive any part of our Agreement, notify Local 44 immediately. With your help, Local 44 intends to make sure that all signatory producers comply with their legal obligations and abide by our Collective Bargaining Agreement.

WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

If you are called into the boss' office, the first question to cross your mind should be: do I need my union representative? If the purpose of the meeting is to interview you, or interrogate you about matters that could lead to disciplinary action against you, then the answer is YES. Under these circumstances, not only do you need a union representative, but you have the right to have your union steward with you. This is commonly referred to as your Weingarten rights. The right to such representation was established in the 1975 United States Supreme Court case called NLRB v J. Weingarten. The court held that an employee may be represented by the union at an investigatory interview with his/her employer when the employee reasonably believes that the interview may lead to disciplinary action. Two important points to remember: if you do not know the purpose of the meeting, ask. If you want your union representative to be present, ask. Failure to ask for representation is a waiver of your right. Your employer is not required to voluntarily offer you this protection. You must ask. For the employer to deny you this right is an unfair labor practice and you should notify your union if this happens. If you are disciplined, yet denied your Weingarten rights, be sure to include this claim in your grievance.

I.A.T.S.E. LOCAL 44

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Date: Saturday, 3/12/2005

Time: 9:00 AM

**At: The Sportsmen's Lodge, Empire Room
12833 Ventura Blvd., Studio City, Ca 91604**

The agenda will include: a presentation of the first ever annual budget of Local 44; a review of the Local's financials, with membership question and answer; and a Business Agent's "state of the union" report.

PLEASE BRING YOUR BLUE MEETING CARD WITH YOU.



IN MEMORIAM

ROBERT J. ALLEN
SET DECORATOR
BORN: 7/24/1962
SWORN IN: 1/4/1993
DIED: 1/3/2005

DANIEL HAYES
PROPMAKER
BORN: 7/27/1964
SWORN IN: 1/20/1999
DIED: 2/11/2005

FRED CRAMER
SPECIAL EFFECTS
BORN: 9/13/1929
SWORN IN: 5/10/1967
RETIRED: 1/11/1998
DIED: 2/16/2005

HENRY "HANK" STONECIPHER
COORDINATOR
BORN: 1/16/1923
SWORN IN: 6/4/1947
RETIRED 1/1/1994
DIED: 2/16/2005

TO THE BEST OF LOCAL 44'S KNOWLEDGE, THE FOLLOWING ARE *NON-SIGNATORY* SHOPS:

Applied Effects

Culver City Custom Props

Flix Fx Inc.

The Hand Prop Room

KNB

Stan Winston

Any Key Personnel using these non-signatory shops in connection with Local 44 Jurisdiction work will be the subject of appropriate grievances and further appropriate disciplinary action.

WALLET CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

All proceeds go directly to Local 44 Member, Jimmy "Gator" Wallet, who lost his wife and three young children in the La Conchita Mudslide.

Los Robles Green Golf Course , 299 S. Moorepark Rd, Thousand Oaks
Sunday, March 13th

\$150 per person (Registration Deadline - March 1st), Banquet Only - \$50 per person

GREAT PRIZES!! Raffle tickets are 5 for \$20 pre-paid or \$5 each at the door.

Pre sign-up at 6am -- Shotgun Start at 7am

Please contact the Local 44 callboard for more detials 818-769-2500.

Those of you who are unable to attend, but would like to contribute, please call
Lycee Esparza at 805-339-0080.



COMMITTEE TO ENHANCE ACCESS TO STUDIO LOTS UPDATE

Dear Members:

I listened to a lot of propmakers and members of other crafts that told me of their problems getting on to the studio lots to seek work, or present identification cards and people not using the callboard to obtain work. After I brought this information to the Executive board, I was given the OK to go forward with ideas and suggestions to work on this endeavor. Out of all of our members who were working, non-working, or inactive, only five people offered their services to work to resolve problems in this area. But unless more members become interested in this issue, I will have to presume there are no problems and no reason to go forward with this project. Let me know if there is added interest.

Sincerely,
Gene Owens

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS HIGHLIGHTS

Many of our members have expressed an interest in the content of the monthly Executive Board meetings. Below is a summary of the most recent meetings. These are only brief highlights and do not contain great detail. They are meant to give an overview of things that were discussed, not a fully accurate account. Any member wishing to read the minutes of the Executive Board in their entirety, may do so by appointment through the Secretary-Treasurer's office.

Wed. January 5th, 2005 – Regular Meeting

Presentation: Business Agent Report. Special Effects Man Rocky Gehr was injured in a mortar accident while working in Las Vegas and is in critical condition.

Motion: To contribute \$2,000 for the immediate needs of Rocky Gehr's family.

Motion passed.

Discussion: Fining members who fail to report their work status as per the Constitution and By-Laws.

The IA Business Agent discussion of strategy of organizing multi-Local shops.

Talk of the "illegal" deal memos signed. Attorney Levy pointed out it is a violation by a producer to negotiate away contractual rights.

Progress on the SAT contract; awaiting IA and Greg Bilson signatures.

Presentation: Secretary-Treasurer Report. The bill for the Retiree Christmas Party was discussed; in the future could we get donated door prizes.

Copies of 2 letters to E-Board and Stewards to pay their per capita payments beginning 2005; and to supervisors to check hire lists for eligibility of members for work.

The Board entered into Executive Session.

Consideration of putting "Newsreel" on website. Request to include write-ups of outstanding contributions by members not recognized by awards.

Review of Ms. Kelner and Mr. Ahrens: Business Agent Cunningham stated the workload in the B.A. side of the office required additional staff and Ms. Kelner was needed to help the Assistant B.A.s.

Secretary-Treasurer Jennings stated that Mr. Ahrens position was the combining of 3 previous positions with the additional responsibility of legislative/political outreach and that he was a \$100,000 payroll savings.

The E-Board voted to wait until after the budget meeting to make a decision on these two positions.

Discussion: On the need for the number of Shop Stewards. Objections were raised over the number of Stewards and some of the choices. What were the specific duties of the Shop Stewards? Request was made for the Stewards to begin carrying a log book.

Motion: That Shop Stewards keep a log book and submit reports the beginning of each

month starting March 2005.

On a split vote, motion passed.

Review of California Election Committee letter requesting compensation for election cost overruns.

Motion: That the Secretary-Treasurer consult with attorney Levy for further action.

Motion passed with one abstention.

Discussion: Retiree Category and Bylaw Amendment. A letter was provided E-Board members with results of meeting with Barry Kingston, the Secretary-Treasurer and attorney Levy.

The Constitution has specified criteria for a member to be retired which cannot be changed without changing the Constitution. The previous category for Retirees was not proper. The By-Laws are amendable by the E-Board where the Constitution is not clear or does not address the issue.

The Secretary-Treasurer explained the process of amending the By-Laws in order to cover certain Retiree categories legally.

Motion: To approve two tables at \$3,000 for Art Director's Guild Awards Ceremony.

Motion passed with three abstentions.

A request was made that all future events be given prior notification and discussion before approval of funds.

Wed. January 19th, 2005 – Regular Meeting

The Board entered into Executive Session.

Compensation Committee Report:

President Thomas presented the Committee recommendations. The Business Agent salary should be Set Decorator rate plus 20%; the Secretary-Treasurer rate should be Coordinator rate plus 10%. The car insurance and mileage reimbursements should be eliminated and a weekly car allowance used to replace them.

Discussion: Over the method used to derive the two salaried scales.

The Business Agent read a letter from IA President Short from 2001, stating an incoming officer's wages could not be reduced.

There was discussion of setting precedent for future administrations; that the incoming percentages over-scale was inequitable. Also, request was made to use an established hourly rate for computation rather than two salaried rates and finding an hourly rate from them.

There was discussion over 6th and 7th days worked.

Motion: To table compensation matter pending a rewrite of the wording of the proposal by President Thomas.

Motion passed.

FTAC Presentation

FTAC members Joseph Livolsi, Robert Amico, and Gene Warren Jr. presented their situation. Canadian and world film subsidies are luring American filmmakers away. FTAC wishes to file a 301A petition with the World

Trade Organization for unfair trade practices in violation of existing trade agreements. FTAC wants a united effort from trade organizations. FTAC is attempting to raise funds for the legal efforts to file this petition from several interested Locals and wants to inform the membership through Local 44.

Presentation: Business Agent Report. The ongoing grievances Local 44 has filed were presented.

The Business Agent read a letter regarding the Casting Directors organizing effort and a letter from Local 399 outlining their requests.

Motion: To show support for the Casting Director's efforts.

Motion passed with one abstention.

Motion: To send a letter to IA President Tom Short regarding the Casting Director's organizing efforts.

Motion passed.

Discussion: On the IA proposal to organize non-union "set shops". Other IA shops are giving up initiation dues, Local 44 is not.

Presentation: Secretary-Treasurer Report. A report on the efforts to bring in working members who had not paid dues. A recent report showed 30% of the members on one lot were just reinstated.

Attorney Levy has suggested an alternative to the 3 day letter, that of bringing members to trial for non-payment.

Discussion: A possible loophole in going after people who won't join by reporting them to Motion Picture Health and Welfare.

A schedule of E-Board and craft meetings was presented and it was suggested that the twice monthly E-Board meetings might be reduced to one a month again in June.

Presentation: The Retiree By-Law Amendments. At the request of the E-Board, the Secretary-Treasurer and attorney Levy composed 4 amendments to cover retired members not presently covered in the CBLs. It would be in the By-Laws under Article 3.

Section 13 Retired (a restatement of the terms already in the Constitution): A member who is 65+ in age, 25+ years in the Industry, is receiving a pension, and has filed with the International to be removed from the roster.

Section 14 Voting Retiree (proposed): A member who is 65+ in age, (25) + years in the Local, receiving a pension, but *not* filed with the International to remove their name, in order to vote.

Section 15 Pensioner (proposed): A member who is *not* yet 65 years old and who has at least (?) years in the Local.

Section 16 Reduced Active Member (proposed): A member 65+ in age, having the Retiree experience years, not removed from the International roster, and able to work a reduced work schedule without disrupting their retirement benefits.

Motion: To table the discussion until next

E-Board meeting.

In a split vote, motion denied.

Motion: *To accept the proposed By-Laws with the change of required years in the Local in Sections 14 and 15 changed to 20.*

Motion passed.

The proposals are to be sent to the International for approval.

Discussion: Progress regarding unfinished legal situations; on members working out of higher classification especially in Effects.

Discussion: In an attempt to reduce payroll, talks about the needs for three roving B.A.s.

Motion: *To reduce the roving Business Agents to one, and that Mr. Cunningham keep his choice of the three.*

Motion passed with four abstentions.

Wed. February 9th – Regular Meeting

The Board entered into Executive Session.

Motion: *To take cognizance of the charges filed by one Local 44 member against a brother member.*

Motion was carried with two abstentions.

A request was made to schedule a Constitution and By-Law Committee meeting.

The Board entered into Executive Session.

Motion: *To maintain the Business Agent and Secretary-Treasurer salaries at current levels until the independent audit findings to keep the salaries from changing again.*

A discussion ensued taking two viewpoints: one, that the Compensation Committee had spent enough time and energy to create their findings; and two, that the findings of the annual audit and the annual budget might alter current conclusions.

Motion: *The previous motion was restated.*

On a split decision, motion passed with three abstentions.

The Board entered into Executive Session.

Motion: *To pay President Thomas for his recent IA Mid-Winter meeting for 12 hours on days worked, 8 hours on travel days, and four hours on idle days, per the contract.*

Motion passed with two abstentions.

Motion: *To deny the Business Agent and Secretary-Treasurer sixth and seventh day paid for the IA Mid-Winter meeting.*

On a split vote, motion passed with three abstentions.

Motion: *To allow the extra visitors to the evenings meetings to enter on this occasion.*

Motion passed.

Presentation: Business Agent Report.

Two non-Union prop shops had contacted Local 44 after their names were placed on last month's Newreel.

The Business Agent read a letter regarding action taken against several companies who

were not paying their employees on-time or at all.

The Business Agent gave a report on the progress of several grievances, including a handful of illegal hire situations. There was discussion about pursuing hiring personnel.

A letter was read regarding the efforts to have the scaffold erection course F added to Coordinators, Special Effects and Propmakers by Safety Passport.

Member's questions about the SAT contract were discussed. The Business Agent explained that apprentices would not pay initiation dues to prevent them from using the issued dues card and leaving the program as a paid up member.

Presentation: Secretary-Treasurer Report. New initiations are ahead of last year's pace.

The roof on the Burbank property needs replacing. An estimate was presented

Motion: *To allocate \$15,000 to repair the Burbank property roof.*

Motion passed.

Jimmy Wallet had been initiated into the Local, with the Local waiving his initiation fee.

Michael Van Dyke had expressed his desire to step down from his Executive Board Representative position and requested Armando "Grande" Gonzales as his replacement.

Motion: *To add Local 44's Newreel on the Local's website if legal counsel finds no legal problems.*

Motion passed.

Motion: *To accept Armando Grande Gonzales as the new Propmaker Rep upon the resignation of Michael Van Dyke.*

Motion passed.

Discussion: Whether to buy a table at the SDSA luncheon. A point was made about how the seats were assigned.

Motion: *To buy one table at the SDSA function for \$1,000.*

Motion passed.

A preliminary budget for the Local was handed out.

Motion: *To make Tuesday February 22 a special meeting to concentrate on the Local's budget passage.*

Motion passed.

Discussion: A letter was read concerning liability issues over the use of member's equipment rented on a show. What are the options?

Issues were brought up involving the amount of personal information that is now being requested by producers on start sheets.

Discussion: The positions of "Roving" B.A.s were re-addressed. These are Retirees working 39 ½ hours a month. Issues were raised about their additional compensation and job duties.

Motion: *To retain the services of the previously dismissed Roving B.A.s with regular reports on their work and the elimination of reimbursed meals.*

On a split vote, motion passed with two

abstentions.

Discussion: For the first time the number of request to attend an Executive Board meeting had exceeded the number allowed. The subject of miking the meetings was re-addressed.

Motion: *To table the discussion and add it to the Special Meeting agenda of February 22.*

On a split vote, motion passed.

Presentation: Request for Retiree Representative. William Centonze (retired Coordinator) presented the Executive Board with a proposal to add two Retiree Representatives on the Board and to allow the Retirees to have a "craft" meeting specifically for Retirees.

Discussion: The Board was generally favorable to Mr. Centonze's request but had conflict with the idea and the Constitution and By-Laws in two areas. The Constitution limits the positions a Retiree may hold and Representatives of "crafts" must be elected. Discussion ensued as to how to best address the situation. It was noted that this issue was being addressed in the CBL rewrite.

A paper was read regarding the upcoming General Membership meeting.

Motion: *That no "guest" speakers be allowed at the General Membership meeting March 12, 2005.*

Motion passed.

Discussion: The St. Patrick's Day Retiree Luncheon. A request was made to fund this event. Talk surrounded the need to have better advance warning and figures for events.

Motion: *To approve up to \$5,000 for the St. Patrick's Day Retiree Luncheon.*

Motion passed.

Motion: *That all events capable of advance planning be budgeted and approved two months ahead of time.*

Motion passed.

Discussion: The Propmaster's Benefit Golf Tournament with proceeds to the Local 44 Benevolent Fund.

Motion: *To take out a t-box ad in the amount of \$1,200 for the benefit.*

Motion passed.

Discussion: The East Valley Police Activity Supporters are looking for a donation of up to \$1,500.

Motion: *To write the organization a letter explaining the Local's present financial situation and to make the request again next year.*

Motion passed.

Presentation: Update on Wallet fundraiser and Martin Sheen participation.

APRIL 1, 2005
IS THE NEXT DATE FOR LOCAL 44 DUES.
DUES ARE PAYABLE ON OR BEFORE THE
FIRST DAY OF EACH QUARTER.
**DUES DATES: JANUARY 1, APRIL 1,
JULY 1, OCTOBER 1**