

# LOCAL 44 NEWSREEL



VOLUME 17, ISSUE 2

IATSE LOCAL 44

MARCH-APRIL, 2006

ED BROWN  
INTERIM BUSINESS AGENT

ELLIOT JENNINGS  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

ERIK NELSON  
PRESIDENT

## LOCAL 44 REJECTS CONTRACT HOLLYWOOD LOCALS VOTE FOR RATIFICATION

Complete results, pg. 9

*General Membership Meeting... Pg.8*

*Speak Up!... Pg. 10*

*Team 3 Studio Divers... Pg. 11*

*"The worst thing about Europe is that you can't go out in the middle of the night and get a Slurpee."  
-Tellis Frank*

## LOCAL 44 SHOP STEWARDS

### CBS Studio Center

Tibor "Ted" Barti  
818-236-1641  
Arthur Eishtadt  
818-236-0372

### Universal Studios

Michael Cappello  
818-215-4303  
Coy Lawson (Property)

### Sony Studios

Chic Chaldou  
818-236-0581

### Paramount Pictures

Tony Chavez  
818-236-0366

### Warner Bros.

Dennis Christensen  
818-953-0300  
Steve Lampke (Property)  
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### Warner Bros. Ranch

John Petros  
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818-236-0917

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"Grande" Gonzalez  
818-261-2886  
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Brian Kelner  
Thomas Krausz  
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Anthony Price  
Joe Recchia  
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Randy Severino  
Anthony Syracuse  
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818-236-1172

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Andrea Joel  
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Kenneth Knight  
818-467-1966

### Fox Studios

James "Jimmy" Meyer  
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Bryce Vardanian  
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Bobby Zeletes

### ISS

Leigh Dennis

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### Lennie Marvin

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**The deadline for the next  
Newsreel is:  
Monday, April 10, 2005**

**Please be sure your contact information is  
clearly marked.**

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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](mailto:eboard@local44.org)**

*"It is a mistake to try to look too far ahead. The chain of destiny can only be grasped one link at a time."  
-Sir Winston Churchill*

# A Message from Interim Business Agent Ed Brown



The 2006-2009 Hollywood Basic Agreement has been ratified by the overall voting membership of the West Coast locals. On Thursday March 9, 2006 as your Interim Business Agent I presented the results of the ballot count of Local44 voting membership to the International. The Local 44 results are as follows: Of the 5,567 eligible voting members, a total of 1,839 ballots were cast and returned, which represents 33% participation. Of those cast ballots 512 were **for** ratification, with the remaining 1,313 ballots cast **against** ratification (14 ballots were deemed "invalid"). Local 44 engaged the services of The American Arbitration Association to certify our ballot count and invited witnesses to this count, of which three were in attendance. This vote is based on the same principals as the Electoral College used in Presidential elections, whereas each local is given (1) vote for its charter and (1) vote for every 100 members eligible to vote, which gives Local44 a total of 57 electoral votes. The results for all locals were 114 Electoral votes **against** ratification and 235 Electoral votes **for** ratification.

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As many of you are aware, Local 44's Business Agent Ronnie Cunningham has been temporarily

suspended from his duties and office pending trial. Please be aware that these are very serious charges, but at present are mere allegations and in no way infer guilt. I implore our membership to allow the process to proceed without losing focus. Please allow Mr. Cunningham to provide his defense, while allowing those that have brought these charges against him their burden of evidence.

During this period it is my intention to keep the business of the membership on track and focused. I want to assure those that have ongoing member related issues, that these items will not fall through the cracks. Every Local 44 member is still being fully represented and will remain that way throughout this process. To that point I have recommended to the Executive Board the appointment of two Assistant Business Representatives to fill the currently vacant positions during this interim period. Their interim appointment has been approved by the Executive Board and they are currently available to field your concerns as they arise.

Let me again assure all of you that my intentions are to keep "the train on the tracks" during this very difficult time. For those of you that don't know me, ask anyone who does; the best interest of the membership both active and retired is my paramount concern. I

could not have imagined that when called to fill the position as Assistant Business Agent that I would be serving you, at the direction of your Executive Board, as Interim Business Agent. That having been said, I give you my word that I will do all in my power to uphold the integrity of Local44 during what can only be termed as a very trying period. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me.

Fraternally,  
Ed Brown  
Interim Business Agent

## CORRECTION

In the January/February 2006 NEWSREEL, Alice Baker (Set Decorator) was incorrectly listed on the Dropped Members page. NEWSREEL now sets the record straight, and regrets the error.

*In the last issue, the Newsreel printed some information about the Warner Bros. Studios Retirees' club. Contact information printed in that article was incorrect. Below is the updated contact information as well as additional information about the club:*

## For Retirees Who Have Been Previously Employed by Warner Bros. Studios:

You may not know it, but we have a retirees' club on the lot. You're welcome to join as soon as you retire.

We have monthly breakfast meetings from 8 AM to 10 AM every first Wednesday of each month in the executive dining room next to the commissary.

For the walking impaired, we have our own shuttle service between the Franklin parking structure (gate 3), across from gate 2, to the commissary and back from 7:30 AM – 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM to 10:20 AM.

We enjoy many trips (day & overnight), free first run movies, great plays at the Glendale Centre Theatre, special luncheons, golf and bowling. We especially enjoy socializing with our friends and associates.

To qualify for membership you must have been employed for at least one year of cumulative time at the following companies: Warner Bros. Inc., including affiliated companies and their subsidiaries such as, but not limited to, Warner Bros. Studio Facilities, Warner Home Video, Warner Bros. TV Distribution Co., Warner Bros. Records, etc. The dues are \$10.00 per year, including your spouse. It starts each year from August 1 to July 31 of the following year.

**For an application, mail your request to:  
The Warner Bros. Studios Retirees' Club  
4000 Warner Blvd., Bldg. 8, Room 2  
Burbank, CA 91522**

**Or call:**

**Bill Gowdy, Acting President at 818-347-0848;  
or Judith Chapman, Secretary at 818-841-5256**

## I.S.S. PROP MASTER GOLF TOURNAMENT

Independent Studio Services is holding its 9th Annual Prop "Master" Golf Tournament at Robinson Ranch in Santa Clarita on April 14, 2006. Robinson Ranch is known for its amazing greens and challenging terrain. And the best part is, all proceeds beyond the tournament costs are being donated to Local 44's Benevolent Fund!

If you are interested in playing in the tournament, would like to volunteer, purchase a Tee Box Ad, or want to make a donation, please contact Gregg Bilson Jr., Rick Caprarelli, or Jennifer Scott at 818-951-5600 (phone) or 818-951-2850 (fax). Or log on to [www.local44.org](http://www.local44.org) for more information or an application

**Date:** April 14, 2006

**Time:** 8:30 AM Shotgun Start

**Location:** Robinson Ranch,  
Mountain Course, Santa Clarita

**Cost:** \$150 payable to I.S.S. Includes everything for the day: breakfast, lunch, awards, cash and prizes!





# All That Can Be Said

By Elliot Jennings

members that was ultimately nullified by greater numbers in other Hollywood Locals voting on the same contract.

Board has Ronnie supporters and neutrals. The vote was 16-0 to move this to a trial. The truth is that the seriousness of both sets of charges was such that the Board had no choice but to take action.

## Myths

This is one of the more difficult articles I have had to write, not only because of the political and legal issues that are imbedded with this situation, but with the limitations and constraints upon the information I'm allowed to disseminate.

As is common knowledge to all but the most reclusive 44 member, Ron Cunningham has been suspended from his duties as Business Agent of this Local.

A suspension is not a conviction; it means that an Officer is temporarily removed from his duties, including presenting himself in his position, until the trial is completed.

Rumors and misinformation abound. And this event has overshadowed other important and groundbreaking news over the past months.

Forced into the shadows is the first successful budget in Local 44's history and the creation of the second; we have accomplished the greatest increase in funds into the Local's investments in a decade. Diminished in the headlines was the free forum debate at the General Membership Meeting in which the contract negotiations were discussed with an Executive Board nearly equally divided on ratification. Also, lost was a vote against ratification by Local 44

Trusteeship and handcuffs: Let's dispel a couple of the more outrageous rumors: the International has placed Local 44 into Trusteeship and Cunningham was led away handcuffed by the police. Neither was the case.

The International: There is a rumor that the International orchestrated this to silence Cunningham's anti-ratification stance on the Contract. By the time members became aware of this suspension, the majority would have already placed their ballots in the mail.

Also, Cunningham had an opportunity to express himself at the General Membership Meeting.

As noted earlier and in other articles, more than half the Executive Board agreed with Cunningham on voting against the Contract, and were quite vocal in their position.

The Charging Party against Cunningham is one of the most vociferous anti-International, anti-Short, anti-ratification members of the Board; he was also a member of Cunningham's 2004 re-election group.

The E-Board: It is always a favorite of conspiracy proponents to believe the Executive Board was plotting things. However, the

## When You Retire

Just a reminder to those of you getting ready to retire; you must retire with the Local as well as the Plans.

In order to retire with Local 44 you must do one of the following:

**Retire out with the IA.** This requires filling out a form that can be obtained from the Business Office, and handing it in with a copy of your Social Security Awards page. You no longer pay dues. You also no longer can vote.

**Become a Voting Retiree, Pensioner, or Reduced Active.** These categories are reduced payments, but allow you voting privileges. Call the Business Office for specifics.

You must do one of these or you lose your Local 44 benefits: life insurance, medical co-pay assistance, correspondence (including the Newreel), invitations to events.

Attention Permanently Disabled: Many of the above benefits are available to you also. You must fill out the proper forms with Local 44 or the IA.

# ATTENTION HIRING PERSONNEL

Local 44 is rapidly approaching pilot and feature season, and that means we may soon be into permits again.

Please be advised that hiring a permit MUST COME THROUGH THE CALLBOARD.

If a permit is hired without a call being placed through the Callboard, that hire is essentially illegal!

If you hire a permit without allowing the Callboard a chance to fill it, the hiring personnel could be in trouble, the Production could be fined, and you've done a disservice to the permit because their days will not be approved when they try to join. We must have a record of the turnover on our end.

What if I hear that the Local is into permits, can't I just hire without calling? NO!

There may be extenuating circumstances for a particular turnover; it may have been an early evening call that needed to be filled at an early hour, it may have been for a particular craft, or it may have required specialized skills which only a few members qualified for (i.e. a certified welder).

It may also be that after a turned over call, a member with whom a message has been placed calls in late; that member would then be available for other late calls.

If we don't have a record of it on our end, it doesn't count. Please play by the rules, it helps us all.

# STRAIGHT TIME

By Craig Raiche

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Just 24 months ago, Local 44 suffered a most painful election. Marred by ineptitude and contention it was a spectacle by anyone's measure.

17 months ago, "winners" of that election were finally sworn into office. Yes, it took a full 7 months just to get to that point!

12 months ago, Local 44 representatives discussed various concerns with the AMPTP at our so-called "Quarterly Meeting" with Producers.

8 months ago, Local 44 representatives determined union policy with other IA Delegates at our "Quadrennial International Convention."

3 months ago, Local 44 representatives negotiated new terms and conditions for our West Coast "Basic Agreement."

In just twenty-four months we participated in a Local election, an IATSE Convention, a Quarterly Meeting and a contract negotiation with Producers. Along the way, we determined this local's very first budget. We also cut expenses, increased revenues and improved communications. Throughout all, we strove for complete transparency and absolute accountability in all our dealings.

I mention these things to



serve notice that - believe it or not - our next Local election is less than a year away. I also mention these things so each candidate is well aware of the real work that awaits all Executive Board members.

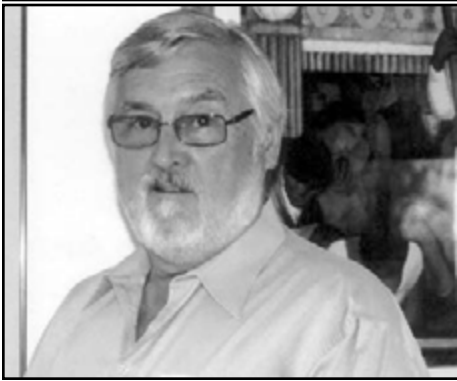
In our last election, 13 first-time candidates were voted into office. Quite clearly, our rank and file wanted big changes in leadership. Interestingly, and quite obviously, our changes in leadership didn't exactly end when that election did.

These have been busy, exciting and tumultuous times for our Local 44 electorate. Constructing a better future for both our Local and our members is a sometimes troubling, often tedious, but always worthwhile endeavor. If you too, wish to run for office in our next election, may I be the first to wish you, "Good Luck."

Thank You For Reading,

Respectfully and Fraternally,

Craig Raiche



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Erik Nelson

Turmoil. That seems to be the descriptive word heard around here lately too much of the time. The fact is that control is more accurately descriptive. There is a knowledge that the local is once again being governed from a sound foundation. That is not said for self aggrandizement but to express gratitude that inequities that have gone on for many years have come to an end and that the future of our local shines with the aura of openness, equality and brotherhood. Wherever there is democracy deciding how an organization continues, there will be a certain amount of political intrigue, but done openly and treated with fairness the organization will prosper. Minority reports will continue to be important information for all of our communications because in our democracy there will always be more than one point of view. Fairly stating those various points of view without chastising members who voice disagreement with the majority's decisions will keep our union strong. A democratic organization does not march in lockstep, but each at his own pace together toward the goal of a better union, a better workplace for all of us.

In 1978 Local 44 took on the services of a CPA, Torrey Webb, to handle that part of our union business that it takes a CPA to

understand. Over the years he has worked with the various Secretary/Treasurers, Business Agents and Executive Boards to audit the financial activities of our Local. He has been involved when we went into Trusteeship. The International felt he was suitable to stay on to keep continuity. When we came out of that Trusteeship he continued to guide us; helping us when computers became a needed accessory in our daily lives, guiding us through the anticipated disasters that Y2K suggested were eminent, helping to understand the complexities of taking on our new building and overseeing our elections - chores that were not part of the contract that we had with him as our CPA but our Secretary/Treasurer at that time felt he needed Webb's assistance. His services with Local 44 came to a conclusion at the end of 2005. I am late in writing this note, but you should know that Brother Jennings has been active in finding the proper person to handle the chores for which a CPA might be needed.

The results of the recent Basic Agreement ratification balloting will bring a few changes to the way we use our Medical Fund when the new contract is initiated later this year. Please be aware that a variety of co-pays will be changing. I know that the changes will be enumerated in a mailing before the contract goes into effect - don't throw that paperwork away - it is not junk mail.

Another ballot will be sent your way in the very near future. One that concerns a change in the

electoral process at local 44. The Article in the Constitution that specifies how the elections are to be held is to be changed with your approval. There has been a lot of hard work done by the Committee striving to update our Constitution with alterations the Executive Board has put their stamp of approval on it, as has the International (which must approve any changes we make to our Constitution and Bylaws). You are urged to send in your ballot marked for approval of the changes. I urge you as does the Executive Board. It will keep us from being drawn into the money-wasting process that we found ourselves in during the last few elections. Watch for your ballot!

Recently you were urged to support Mr. Wildman in his bid for reelection to the California Assembly. He has since dropped out of the race. Hopefully he will find a suitable position to run for office as he has been a major support for our industry - the working stiff - over the years.

I suggest that you check FTAC's website for an announcement soon regarding a new report on where our work is going. Steve Katz will release his most recent study on outsourcing in our industry very soon and the rumors are that it has much more information than his previous reports which have been accepted as the most unbiased and honest of the investigations on this issue.

With Spring on its way - things are going to be much sunnier for us all.

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# 2006 General Membership Meeting

## Focused on Contract Issues

The 2006 Local 44 General Membership meeting was held on the morning of Sunday, February 26th at The Sportsmen's Lodge. Attendance reached 423, which was unfortunately, not enough for a quorum, rendering the meeting informational only.

As expected, the bulk of discussions centered around ratification of the new contract. The Executive Board and Officers were split, with eight members supporting ratification, and ten members recommending rejection of the contract. Elliot Jennings, Secretary-Treasurer; Erin Hennessey, Vice-President; Gene Owens, Propmakers; Emily Ferry, Prop Masters; Peter Angles II, Property; Gary Oseransky, Property; Brenda Meyers-Ballard, Set Decorators;

and John Samson, Coordinators supported ratification of the contract. Ronnie Cunningham,

itive aspects of the new contract were highlighted; including wage, IAP and pension increases and the retirees' 13th and 14th checks being retained.

The popular consensus among members seemed to be against ratification. Officers and Board members cited changes and reductions in the Healthcare plan and possible loss of pension increases after 2009 as the main reasons to reject the proposed contract.

When the microphone was opened to the membership, many impassioned speeches were delivered

regarding the need to at least retain the current health and pension plans, if not increase the benefits provided. Additionally, members expressed willingness to strike, and frustration over the power held



Business Agent; Erik Nelson, President; Michael Cappello, Propmakers; Armando Gonzalez, Propmakers; J.D. Streett, Special Effects; J.C. Machit, Special Effects; Craig Raiche, Prop Masters; Tobey Bays, Property; Robinson Royce, Set Decorators; and John Matheson, Coordinators were against ratification of the contract.

Executive Board Members and Officers who spoke in support of ratification of the contract cited the need for at least four to ten other Hollywood locals' rejection of the contract for there to be even a chance at sending the producers back to the bargaining table, a goal not likely to be achieved. Board Members also reasoned that they were reluctant to recommend a strike at such a precarious time in the industry. Additionally, the pos-





by the International. It was suggested that term limits be imposed, and International Officers be elected by a “one man, one vote” system rather than the current “electoral college” process. Officers and Board Members noted that this had been attempted in the past to no avail.

Other issues that were brought up during the meeting included the hiring of permits, new technolo-



gies infringing on Local 44 jurisdiction, and earlier, more detailed communication about upcoming negotiations that stand to affect the entire membership. Additionally, members expressed interest in revisiting the issue of allowing for a Retiree Representative on the Executive Board, and requested that there be a time and place for retirees to meet and discuss specific areas of concern.

The meeting concluded with the general sentiment running toward a rejection of the new contract. Members left voicing a desire to get the word out to convince members from Local 44 and other locals to vote against ratification.

On March 7, 2006 the votes were counted and Local 44 rejected ratification of the new contract by a 512 to 1313 margin.



However, the contract was only rejected by one other Local (Local 600, Camera), and was therefore ratified by both the popular vote and through the electoral college system. *Please see the chart below for complete results.*

## CONTRACT RATIFICATION RESULTS

Local Number/Craft	Membership	Electoral Votes	Pro	Con
44 (Property)	5600	57*	512	1313
80 (Grips)	2800	29	728	116
600 (Camera & Publicists)	5600	57*	141	2227
683 (Lab Technicians)	1100	12	315	14
695 (Sound)	1500	16	415	203
700 (Editors)	6000	61	1259	82
705 (Costumers)	1700	18	594	57
706 (Make-up & Hair)	1500	16	408	53
728 (Electric)	2100	22	517	274
729 (Set Painters)	1000	11	291	33
767 (First Aid)	300	4	139	15
790 (Studio Arts)	200	3	49	0
800 (Art Directors & Scenic Artists)	1400	15	346	35
839 (Animation)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
847 (Set Designers)	300	4	111	15
871 (Script Supervisors)	1300	14	359	135
884 (Studio Teachers)	100	2	70	2
892 (Costume Design)	700	8	196	4
<b>TOTAL: 17 VOTING LOCALS</b>	<b>33,200</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>6450</b>	<b>4578</b>

**POPULAR VOTE: 58% TO 42% IN FAVOR OF RATIFICATION**

**ELECTORAL VOTE: 235 TO 114 IN FAVOR OF RATIFICATION**

\*Locals where electoral votes went against ratification

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# SPEAK UP! ...



## Your chance to speak up on issues you care about.

*There were no responses to the question in the January/February issue.*

This month's question is:

**In light of the recent contract ratification, what steps could be taken in the future to ensure solidarity between Local 44 and the other Hollywood Locals? What are some shared concerns?**

Print or type an answer and mail it in to SPEAK UP!/ Newsreel, IATSE Local 44, 12021 Riverside Drive, North Hollywood, CA 91607. Or, e-mail it to [Newsreel@local44.org](mailto:Newsreel@local44.org).

Try to keep it focused, under 100 words and not libelous. Please give us your name and craft. Sorry, but anonymous responses to SPEAK UP! will not be printed.

Read the results in the next issue of LOCAL 44 NEWSREEL.

**Thank you for participating. Thanks for speaking up!**

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## DAY FINES?! NOT ME!

*Yes, you! And me. In fact, all of us.*

**By: Kehau Quitan, Business Office Staff and Local 44 Member**

**Please be advised:** Quarterly payments are due on or before the first day of the quarter. If you are working and you pay your Quarterly payment after the seventh day of the quarter, you WILL be subject to day fines which are currently \$1.80 per day. According to Article 5, Section 2 of our Constitution, "Dues shall be payable quarterly *in advance* ...on or before the first day of each quarter..., and this Local is not required to send any person any notice whatsoever of their Dues or other indebtedness." A Quarterly payment encompasses your Dues plus any per capita payments to IATSE and other affiliates. This applies to all members. This is not because we want to single you out or because we want to 'rip you off' or because we feel like being mean to you on that particular day; we are simply following the age-old guidelines that were set up to keep all of our members in good standing and available for work.

In addition, we have received some complaints that the day fine is too high at \$1.80 per day. This

too is provided for in Article 3, Section 12 of our By-Laws: "Any member, if working, who allows a card to remain on file or unpaid for by the seventh of the month of the quarter when due, shall be penalized the sum of fifty cents per day for every day until Dues are paid. This late fine will be increased by five cents per year beginning January 1, 1981 and each year thereafter."

We don't want to punish you, nor do we have any particular wish to have you come in and holler at us down at the Hall when we have to charge you day fines because you didn't pay your Quarterly payment on time. So remember:

**LATE PAYMENT OF QUARTERLY PAYMENT  
= DAY FINES**

**but QUARTERLY PAYMENTS PAID ON TIME  
= NO DAY FINES**

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# TEAM 3 STUDIO DIVERS: Unique in Local 44

For many years, the work of Local 44 members was planted firmly on dry land. Team 3 Studio Divers, a newly formed signatory company, aims to change all of that.

Team 3, the first company of its kind to be signatory to the International in association with Local 44, is also affiliated with Local 80 (Grips) and Local 600 (Camera) among others.

Team 3 Studio Divers is owned and operated by Local 44 Construction Coordinator Dwayne Franks; General Foreman, James Nash; Propmakers Adrian Encinas and Paul Small; and Producer-Director / Master Instructor Scott Page-Pagter. Each of the five founders are certified through PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) and are vastly experienced in underwater filming, supervision and set construction.

One of the major motivating factors when Team 3 began the almost two-year process of becoming signatory to the I.A. was an interest in using the skills of Local 44 members underwater. "Local 80 has jurisdiction over water work," explained Franks, "and we

are working with Local 80 as well. But we also deal with underwater construction, set dressing, special effects, greens, you name it..." all areas which require the knowledge and expertise of Local 44 members.

will also be required. "This is the only PADI-approved course of its kind," said Franks, "and it's being taught by the guy who wrote it."

"I've been working underwater for a lot of years," added Page-Pagter. "People can get hurt doing this type of work. We want to create a safer, better working environment."

But beneath the surface, it isn't hard to see the real reason Franks, Nash, Encinas, Small and Page-Pagter formed Team 3 Studio Divers: the love of the job. "It's peaceful down there, you can't get any phone calls," said Page-Pagter with a laugh. "Beepers don't work when you drop them in the water."

Franks added, "There's just nothing better than being underwater."

Team 3 Studio Divers can be reached by phone at 661-309-1708, by e-mail at

Team3SDinc@aol.com, or on their website:

[www.teamthreestudiodivers.com](http://www.teamthreestudiodivers.com).

*If you are interested in taking the studio diver course, contact Team 3 to add your name to the list. You will be notified when the class has been scheduled. Team 3 is offering a discount to Local 44 members, their family and friends.*



*Left to Right, Standing: Adrian Encinas and Dwayne Franks; Seated: Paul Small, James Nash, and Scott Page-Pagter*

Another priority for Team 3 is safety. Scott Page-Pagter is a Master Instructor, and wrote the PADI-approved studio diver course which Team 3 will be offering later in 2006. This course is unique in that participants will practice skills underwater that they will actually use on set. Currently, divers need to be Open Water and Advanced certified in order to take the class. In future, a Rescue certification

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# 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 Elliot,

Thank you so much for your support of our members after hurricane Katrina.

Some of our members landed in your jurisdiction. Thank you for watching out for them.

It has been an amazing journey through recovery for all of us. The union locals have made it easier.

We are grateful.

Fraternally,  
Sara Fanelli

Secretary-Treasurer  
IATSE 478

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To my fellow brothers and sisters,  
As a current member of the 44, I take pride in my work, my title and my Union.

It took me 7 years to get "my days." I worked hard to achieve my goal which was to become a member of the 44. No person gave me a "break", no person made it easy for me. I spent 7 years working on "poverty level jobs" in hopes that I could become a professional SET DRESSER in Hollywood. It was my dream that I made come true.

These current events of Ronnie Cunningham make me sick to think that our Union is THAT pathetic!

Not JUST Ronnie, but the entire LOCAL 44 is a DISAPPOINTMENT to me.

I hope the future holds a better generation of men and women that

can create a community of respect and PROFESSIONALISM.

And secondly, Why is IATSE controlled by the East Coast?

This is HOLLYWOOD!!!!

Get your s\$!t together!

Shannon "Trixie" Gardner

One of the FEW Set Dressers that cares about NOW & the FUTURE. #10847 and damned proud of it

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I just got home from the General Membership Meeting and felt very ill. I could not believe what I heard at the meeting. When a lot of the powers-that-be in our local said they didn't like the new contract but said we should vote "yes" because they didn't think we could do any better.

Well, I don't think these are very good people to handle our local. If it isn't any good, why accept it? Don't tell your members to vote "yes." That's what is wrong with this union. Why not take a stand now and try and stop it rather than spend the rest of your lives trying to get it back? The officers are there to represent the union membership, not be yes men or women for President Short.

It's fine to say, "if you vote 'no' you may be on strike for a month or more." But to say "vote yes" is pretty poor representing for your members.

My feeling is you have to make a stand for your members.

Russell Goble  
Property Master  
(voting retired)

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During the last two elections, I was interested by the dialogue that

was ongoing in the soundstages. By and large, the topics discussed were those "Hot Button Topics" presented to America's voting public by the spin doctors who successfully kept the general populace from addressing what I and others called the REAL issues. I listened as a litany of conservative talk show blather swept aside reason. A steady stream of "Swift Vets and POWs for Truth" (from Texas as it were), Gay Marriage, Abortion, and even Flag Burning and Pledge of Allegiance were poured over Religious Right Issues in a Sundaes of semantics that America's common folk couldn't pass up.

I watched as issues such as Education, Health Care, Body Armor and Armor Protection for troops, Elder Care and Medication, Immigration, and Campaign "Reform", among others, were smoke screened, stonewalled, and swept under the rug. I and others did our best to raise the truly most important issue for those of our demographic, Organized Labor. I tried to explain that it didn't matter WHAT the issues were, as presented to us, but that for our own, and America's political health and wellbeing, it was imperative that we not be swayed from what we could do to REALLY affect our future. To vote with and support Union Solidarity and the manifestation of power back into the hands of politicians answerable to US and not the "Corporations" that have flexed their power well beyond what America should concede to them.

I was constantly bombarded by a diatribe from mainly younger

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Gentlemen echoing very tired rhetoric touting Conservative jargon and throwing around statements defending “Capitalism”. We’re losing sight here folks.

Winston Churchill once said, “If, at the age of twenty, you aren’t a Liberal, you don’t have a heart. If, at the age of forty, you aren’t a Conservative, you don’t have a BRAIN!” What ol’ Winston left out was it is the balance of the TWO that lends persons credence. I am not giving up MY hard won Conservative side for ANYONE! Neither will I give up caring about old Peoples’ care and Kids’ education. NOR, will I swallow the spin on the wonders of “Capitalism”. Just because I am a “Unionist”, does NOT mean I am *AGAINST* Capitalism. Quite the contrary, I am a big fan of Capitalism and can state unequivocally that Organized Labor can only be sired BY Capitalism. I just can’t help but be wary and suspicious of “Laissez-faire” Capitalism as it becomes twisted by blind “Corporativism”. I believe “Corporatism” has become Capitalism without a heart and soul. Furthermore, I believe “Consumerism” gives Capitalism not ONLY a heart and soul, but a face as well. And maybe, when “Management” works WITH “Labor”, it has a BRAIN too. I truly believe when Eisenhower gave his gutsy “Farewell Speech”, He wasn’t just warning us about the “Military-Industrial Complex”, but that an ALL encompassing Corporate Capitalism makes our Democracy vulnerable to who can write the biggest check. I fear we have a Government “Of the Dollar, by the Dollar, and FOR the Dollar”. That “People” thing is something I hate to see us all let

go of.

I’m wondering if the antagonists I encountered over the last elections are tired yet of defending Enron, or business leaders like Jack Abramoff, Ken Lay, John Rigas, and their ilk. Had enough of Halliburton (the world’s largest non-union employer), Oil Companies making RECORD profits, and Producers’ with their “Runaway Productions”.

It is time for us to come together, NOW! It is time for us to make up our minds as to what is REALLY important. I suggest we all come together with our own elected officials, our own rank and file, and our Fraternal Associates not only in our industry, but Firefighters, Teachers, Teamsters, Miners, and any others of our Brothers and Sisters willing to close ranks with us and take back our position of relevancy in American politics. But we need to do this NOW! We need to let the coming candidates of BOTH parties know we are not interested in “Hot Button” Issues unless during this coming election they will be about REAL issues affecting our Unions and our LIVES! We need to manifest power. We need to have those wanting our vote know that we will hold them ACCOUNTABLE to following our wishes. We need to let them know that our vote is worth MORE than a corporate check. To make sure that they understand, without our vote, they will NOT be elected. We need “Solidarity”. We need a common agenda. We need to put our Unions’ needs above our petty disagreements over party preference or frivolous issues.

I, for one, don’t care WHAT party I vote for, as long as He or

She is accountable to Organized Labor, and as long as that candidate is responsible to America and her citizens.

I, for one, would be happy to see the dialogue in the Studios turn to one of Union Organizing and Solidarity rather than dividing issues. Once we get our Candidates elected, THEN we can fine tune the issues. This is pretty important, for not only the health of your Unions, your Families, and your future depend on it, but the health of America and our Heritage is fully at stake too.

Sincerely,  
Frank Kilmartin

*If you would like to send a Letter to the Local, please make sure submissions are typed or printed neatly and e-mail newsreel@local44.org, fax: 818-769-1739 ATTN: Newsreel, or mail to Local 44, ATTN: Newsreel, 12021 Riverside Drive, North Hollywood, CA 91607. Submissions may be edited for content and length.*

**ADDITIONAL  
CHARGES LEVIED  
AGAINST  
SUSPENDED  
BUSINESS AGENT  
RONNIE  
CUNNINGHAM**

Additional information at  
[www.local44.org](http://www.local44.org)

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# MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

We wish to recognize and extend congratulations to all members celebrating a  
March Milestone as a Local 44 member.

## 50 Year + Anniversaries

### March

Ackerman, Jackie (70 Yr)	Prop Master
Henderson, Bob (70 Yr)	Prop Master
Capitano, Louis (60 Yr)	Prop Maker
Moffett, Susan (51 Yr)	Property

Fallace, Nancy  
Miller, Jeff  
Yukelson, Debra  
Burnett, Karen  
Todd, Michael  
Diggins, Gregory  
Aitken, Robert  
Bowen, Leeroy  
Courville, Michael  
Congdon, Satcha  
Cabbell, Thomas

Set Decorator  
Prop Maker  
Prop Maker  
Property  
Prop Maker  
Prop Maker  
Property  
Prop Maker  
Prop Master  
Prop Maker  
Property

## 50 Year Anniversaries

There were no 50 year anniversaries in

## 25 Year Anniversaries

### March

Samarzich, Lazar	Greens
Morris, Harold	Property

## 10 Year Anniversaries

### March

Wright, Judy	Prop Maker
Bryant, Greg	Prop Maker
Finch Jr., Terry	Prop Maker
McCumby, Stephen	Prop Master
Ramsay III, John	Prop Maker
Majus, Ryan	Prop Maker
Allon, Shimon	Prop Master
Iadanza, Matty	Property
Mustoe, Daniel	Prop Maker
Scheu, Timothy	Property
Cowsill-Scheu, Tiffany	Property
Bergmann, Jody	Property
Doner, Denise	Prop Master
Benavides, Brian	Prop Maker
Franco III, Johnny	Prop Maker
Byrne, Tristan	Greens
Helderle, Steve	Prop Maker
Bouman, Craig	Prop Maker
Perman, Shelby	Property
Ciesielski, Ronald	Prop Maker
Tittle, Bentley	Property

**KEEP AN EYE  
OUT FOR YOUR  
ANNIVERSARY  
IN OUR NEXT  
ISSUE!**

**If you have an upcoming  
anniversary and DO  
NOT want it printed in  
the Newsreel, please  
notify the business office.  
818-769-2500 ext. 105**

## B & R Fund Update

Recently, you may have noticed a slower response time on requests to the Benevolent and Retirement Fund. This is a temporary situation, emerging from the realization that for some years, the Fund has been lacking in checks and balances required under state and federal law. We are now in the process of putting these procedures in place, and soon the Benevolent and Retirement Fund will be operating more effectively and efficiently.

Please be patient while these changes take place. We are moving as quickly as possible for the betterment of all of our members in need of assistance. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns, please call the hall at 818-769-2500.

## REMEMBRANCES

Kenneth Calhoun  
Propmaker  
Born: 10/30/1921  
Sworn In: 02/10/1972  
Retired: 11/01/1990  
Died: 01/15/2006

Fred Chapman  
Property Master  
Born: 03/26/1923  
Sworn in: 04/12/1961  
Retired: 05/01/1988  
Died: 01/05/2006

Wayne Jones  
Coordinator  
Born: 12/25/1946  
Sworn In: 02/24/1969  
Died: 02/11/2006

Dellwyn Rheaume  
Special Effects  
Born: 06/20/1925  
Sworn In: 04/12/1961  
Retired: 06/01/1989  
Died: 03/06/2006

Richard Scheerer  
Property Master  
Born: 1/30/1922  
Sworn In: 8/27/1947  
Died: 3/9/2006

Michael Sullivan  
Special Effects  
Born: 12/21/1932  
Sworn In: 10/21/1957  
Retired: 01/01/1995  
Died: 01/30/2006

**For complete tribute articles, and updated, detailed information on funeral and memorial services, please log on to our website at [www.local44.org](http://www.local44.org) and click on "In Memory Of."**

# NEW ARRIVALS



On December 14, 2005, my wife Marie and I welcomed our son Will Emerson Parker into this world.

The miracle of child birth is amazing, as anyone who has had a child can attest. Our son's birth is even more miraculous, given that in 1999 Marie was diagnosed with an especially aggressive form of ovarian cancer.

My UNION HEALTH BENEFITS made it possible for us to see a top notch team of doctors who were able to save her life, and also spare one ovary. Six years later, almost to the day of her initial diagnosis, we became pregnant (unassisted, by the way).

Our son is the joy of our life, and we have to say a big THANK YOU to LOCAL 44 for helping make this unbelievable dream a reality!

Martin (Bruce) Parker, Propmaker



Local 44 Welcomes  
Connor Brian Larson  
Born: Monday,  
Februray 27, 2006  
8 Lbs. 0 oz. - 20 1/2  
inches tall  
Proud parents are  
Propmaker Creightin  
Larson and Sandra  
Larson

Local 44 honors Gretchen Rau, Set Decorator of *Memoirs of a Geisha* for her Academy Award win in the category of Art Direction.

Local 44 also wishes to congratulate nominees Jan Pascale, Set Decorator, nominated in the category of Best Art Direction for *Good Night, and Good Luck*; and Daniel Sudick, Special Effects, nominated in the category of Best Achievement in Visual Effects for *War of the Worlds*.

## SEEKING WILLING MEMBERS FOR SPECIALTY JOBS

We occasionally get calls, usually from Prop Houses, requesting a member who is willing to work for lower wages (approximately \$13-\$15 an hour). The advantage of these jobs is that they are long-term, and all hours worked are bankable with the Motion Picture Pension and Health Plans. It normally takes the Callboard a considerable amount of time to fill these calls. If you are interested in this type of position, please call the hall and leave your name with the Callboard.  
Thanks!



# A NEW FACE FOR WWW.LOCAL44.ORG

Local 44's website is getting a makeover. In early March, Graphic Designer and web expert Paul Bennett started working with the Local's officers and staff to create a more useful, user-friendly site. According to Bennett, "The goal is to build a community on Local 44's website."

Immediate improvements to the site include a cleaner design and password-protected areas for secure member communications. "Members will be able to create an account and log on to a community bulletin board – it's something where people can be involved on a day-to-day basis," Bennett explained.

Members will also be able to log in to create and edit resumes right from the site. Potential employers will have easy access to members' resumes from their homes, offices or laptops. Additionally, the online Tool Crib will be expanded to allow sellers to post pictures and add an expanded scope of information. Potential buyers can contact the member through the site, and even bid on the items being sold.

Over the coming months, the site's capabilities will continue to expand, with long-term goals including member polling, an online store, and possible online dues paying. Please contact Paul at [pbennett@local44.org](mailto:pbennett@local44.org) if you have web content or suggestions for additional improvements.

By the time this Newsreel reaches your mailbox, the new website may have already launched. We encourage all members to check it frequently, and become part of our online community. Local 44 is striving to keep up with new technologies, and utilize the resources available to keep our members informed, involved and working.



*Web designer Paul Bennett works on the new look of Local 44's website.*

**Please log on to [www.local44.org](http://www.local44.org).**

**APRIL 1, 2006  
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**

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# 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 18th, 2006 – Golden Boot Trial

The defendant did not show for the trial and offered no explanation for his absence. Three witnesses for the charging parties were present.

### TRIAL

#### **Gary Oseransky and J.D. Streett vs. Stewart McGuire (This matter involved funds or services misappropriated)**

These charges were voted on by secret ballot and the following are the penalties or assessments:

Charge #1: Article 10; Section 1 (Misappropriation of Funds or Property);  
**Guilty**

Charge #2: Article 8 (Powers & Duties); Section 6 (Business Representative);  
**Guilty**

Charge #3: Article 7 (Executive Board); Section 2 (General Supervision);  
**Not Guilty**

Charge #4: Article 7 (Executive Board); Section 3 (Interpret Laws);  
**Not Guilty**

Charge #5: Article 12 (Discipline of Members); Section 1 (Grounds);  
**Not Guilty**

Charge #6: Article 14 (Observance of Laws); Section 2 (Supreme Laws);  
**Not Guilty**

Charge #7: Article 14 (Observance of Laws); Section 5 (Decisions of the Executive Board);  
**Guilty**

The penalties were as follows:  
He shall receive a fine of \$8,800 equal to the misappropriated funds or property.  
He shall receive a follow-up letter of censure.

Discussion: A request was made by former Local 44 office staffer Gionna Aguilar for severance pay.

**Motion: To not pay the requested severance pay.**

**On a split vote motion passed, with one abstention.**

## Tues., January 31st, 2006 - Budget Meeting

Presentation: The Secretary-Treasurer presented the Executive Board with the proposed budget for 2006, with estimates from the recently concluded 2005 budget.

Discussion: The Board went through all 5 pages of the budget proposal, deleting and adding funds where discussed. The budget had a rearrangement of office staffing that included an additional B.A. This position could alter the internal staffing of the office and the higher figures for all positions were in the budget to allow movement. If an arrangement was made with lower paid staff, the budget would show a profit in that area.

**Motion: To accept the 2006 budget as proposed, but its acceptance does not automatically approve of possible new positions.**

**Motion passed.**

Discussion: It was noted that the donation on behalf of the members of Local 44 IATSE to the victims of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans had been much appreciated.

Discussion: The Article 9, Election section of the CBLs needed addressing. As there was a General Membership Meeting coming up, Emily Ferry would present it to the members. It was decided not to have the Article there as it might confuse members who would be there about the Ratification of the Contract.

Presentation: Michael Sullivan beneficiary need. Brother Sullivan recently died without an estate. He was due a life insurance payout. Those taking care of the burial had no funds to do so. Could the Local advance his death benefit amount to cover funeral costs with the amount paid off when the check arrived at the

Local?

**Motion: To advance the Michael Sullivan trustees the death benefit amount for funeral expenses; the amount to be paid back when insurance check arrived.**

**Motion passed.**

Discussion: New shop stewards.

Discussion: The Contract ratification issues. How were we going to represent it to the members? Local 600 appeared to be in opposition, but possibly on a Local issue. Other Locals appear ready to vote against the Contract.

It was pointed out that the Producers had no legal obligation to renegotiate and President Short stated he wouldn't. Would we get a better or worse contract with a strike?

A straw poll vote of the Board showed the majority of the Board in favor of non-ratification of the Contract.

It was said that at the 2005 General Membership meeting the Secretary-Treasurer and Business Agent said they would present an unbiased letter of the pros and cons of the Contract and it was decided that was the format to follow.

The B.A. was asked why at the Retirees Christmas Party he had bragged of saving the 13th and 14th check and was now favoring non-ratification of the Contract? The B.A. claimed at the time he didn't know any more.

## Tues., February 7th, 2006 – Trial

### TRIAL

#### **Michael Clark vs. Thomas Maloney (This matter involved crossing a picket line)**

These charges were voted on in Executive Session and the following are the penalties and assessments:

Charge #1: Article 4 (Members); Section 9 (Disloyalty);  
**Not Guilty**

Charge #2: Article 12 (Discipline of Members); Section 1 (Grounds);  
**Guilty**

Charge #3: Article 14 (Observance of Laws); Section 2 (Supreme Law)  
**Not Guilty - no evidence presented on this charge**

Charge #4: Article 14 (Observance of Laws); Section 6 (Ignorance of Law No Defense)

**Not Guilty**

Charge #5: Article 1 (Membership); Section 5 (Initiation);

**Guilty**

Charge #6: Article 7 (Regulations Governing Employment); Section 3 (Membership Card)

**Not Guilty**

Charge #7: Article 8 (transfer to Article 22 of the International Bylaw) (Strikes and Road Calls); Section 7 (Obeying Strike Call).

**Not Guilty**

The penalties were as follows:

1. Brother Maloney shall write a letter of apology to the brothers and sisters of Local 44.
2. He shall receive a follow-up letter of censure.
3. Both letters shall be published in the Local 44 Newsreel and the website.

**Wed., February 15th – Regular Meeting**

Report: Trial Board of February 7th Carl Hicks gave the report as Trial Chairperson (results are reported above). It was noted that the trial had several small problems, including the absence of witnesses named in the report.

***Motion: To accept the Trial Board’s penalty recommendations.***

**Motion passed with three abstentions.**

There was a request to go out of order of the agenda items to address:

Contract Ratification Letter. The first draft letters were passed to the Board members for and against ratification.

The Business Agent argued that it was purely his prerogative to send out a letter either pro or con and that the other members of the Board were only allowed to sign in support or against the letter.

It was pointed out that the Board was the governing body and that not only the Secretary-Treasurer, but the Business Agent had agreed last year to send a letter with both sides.

It was argued that IA President Tom Short called this an accept or strike contract and that was not how it legally worked, if the members voted against this contract it sent Short back to the bargaining table.

It was countered that though that was legally the case; the reality was that Short and the Producers said this was their last, best offer and that it would in fact amount to a

strike call.

Debate ensued surrounding the number of electoral-college votes needed to ratify and whether the anti-ratification forces were substantial enough to defeat the Contract.

A letter was read with the proxy position of three absent Board members.

Final version letters of both sides of the argument were presented for copying to be done that night.

Presentation: The Budget passed at the prior meeting needed to be revamped in a couple of areas trimming additional funds. Areas were discussed and approved.

***Motion: To accept the 2006 budget as revised.***

**Motion passed.**

Presentation: Retiree Representative.

Discussion happened about having a Retiree Rep on the Executive Board. It was noted that this had been discussed previously; the majority of the Board favored it, but that it required a Constitutional change.

301a Funding: Money was set aside for this in the 2006 budget. What steps would we take from this point? It was suggested to wait until the CEIDR report was finished.

Article 9 Mailing: This issue was pushed until after the date of the ratification of the Contract was announced. There was worry that members might be confused if this arrived in the mail simultaneously with the Contract.

**Wed., March 1, 2006 – Regular Meeting**

Committee Report: Special Litigation Committee. This committee was formed prior to this administration as a liaison between special legal counsel and the Department of Labor investigating the Local.

The Board members were presented with documents that were a report from Special Counsel.

*The Board went into Executive Board session for 51 minutes.*

Affidavit of Charges: Against Ron Cunningham

Charges were preferred against Business Agent Ron Cunningham for alleged impeachable offenses by a member of the Local.

***Motion: To suspend B.A. Cunningham without pay for 30 days pursuant to Article 16 Section 6(a) of the International Constitution or until conclusion of trial, whichever comes first.***

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Dismissal of Cunningham: B.A.

Cunningham was asked to remove himself from the meeting and turn in his office property and phones.

***Motion: To appoint Assistant Business Agent Ed Brown as a temporary Business Agent only through the conclusion of Cunningham’s trial.***

Ed Brown was asked if he would take the position. He agreed.

**Motion was repeated and passed.**

***Motion: Due to his close allegiance to Cunningham, his known rebuke of the Executive Board when they have sided against Cunningham on occasion, that Michael Clark be given a leave of absence with pay until such time as the conclusion of the trial.***

**On a split vote, motion passed.**

***Motion: That Anthony Pawluc be moved into a position of interim Assistant Business Agent because of his knowledge of the workings of the office and the affairs of the Local.***

Discussion: Moving Anthony Pawluc into an Assistant B.A. position. It was discussed that even though Mr. Brown’s position was temporary, that it was written in the CBLs that it was the B.A.’s job to bring his own suggestions to the Board for assistants. Ed Brown requested that he be given a couple days to consider his choices.

**The motion was tabled.**

The Secretary-Treasurer requested whether Anthony Pawluc might be moved into his area of the office to aid in what would surely be a hectic next few days.

*The Board went into Executive Session for 22 minutes.*

***Motion: That Mr. Pawluc is suspended from office for a 2-day period with pay.***

**On a split vote, motion passed, with two abstentions.**

Legal Counsel Levy admonishes Board to keep in mind these are allegations and not an admission of guilt. Guilt or innocence would be proven at trial. Levy drafted a letter for the Board in how they should respond if members wished to question them on the situation.

Discussion: Due to this situation with Cunningham and due to the fact that the Department of Labor was still continuing its investigation, there was a request for additional funding for our DOL counsel.

***Motion: To approve \$25,000 to the special litigation fund.***

**Motion passed.**